

THE
POWER OF RELIGION
ON
THE MIND,
IN
RETIREMENT, AFFLICTION,
AND AT
THE APPROACH OF DEATH:
Exemplified in the
TESTIMONIES AND EXPERIENCE
OF PERSONS DISTINGUISHED BY THEIR
GREATNESS, LEARNING, OR VIRTUE.

'Tis immortality,—'tis that alone,
Amidst life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill. YOUNG.

By *LINDLEY MURRAY.* *K*

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INTRODUCTION.

THE following small collection of evidence in support of religion and virtue, is produced to public view, with a hope that it may prove instrumental to excite serious reflections on the unsatisfying and transitory nature of temporal enjoyments; and to promote a lively concern for the attainment of that felicity which will be sure, complete, and permanent.

Piety and virtue, even when abstractedly considered, are truly amiable, and appear worthy of our earnest pursuit; but when recommended by the lives and testimonies of eminent persons, who have known the world, and experienced the emptiness of its honours, wealth, and pleasures, they derive additional weight, and con-

strain us to acknowledge, that the greatest happiness of man is to be found in religion.

It is one of the many favours which a wise and gracious Providence hath conferred upon mankind, that in every country, and perhaps in almost every district throughout the earth, he has stationed some of his faithful servants, or returning prodigals, as witnesses of his power and goodness, and as encouragers to a life of purity, piety, and beneficence.

The following pages exhibit a few of those striking examples, which, in the quiet hour of reflection, may contribute to arrest the careless and wandering, to animate the sincere and virtuous, and to convince or discountenance those who have been unhappily led to oppose the highest truths, and to forsake the fountain of all their blessings.

A number of our fellow-creatures, of different periods countries, and professions, standing on the confines of mortality, and bearing an uniform

and undisguised testimony to the Power and Excellence of Religion, presents a solemn and interesting spectacle. With the prospect of immortality before them, and no longer influenced by those concerns and passions which obscure the understanding and harden the heart, they must be supposed to view their objects through a proper medium, and to speak the language of truth and soberness.

May the important testimonies of these preachers of righteousness, lead us to just and seasonable reflections on the state of our own minds, and to a sincere and reverent application to the greatest and best of Beings, for the aid of his Holy Spirit, to enlighten and animate us, and to conduct us safely through the paths of life! May his gracious protection be witnessed at the close of our day, when the shadows of the evening shall approach, the glittering vanities of the world be obscured, and all its friendships and resources be found unavailing.

In that awful hour, this divine support will not only preserve us from being distressed with mournful retrospects on the past, or with gloomy apprehensions of what is to come; it will also afford true peace and resignation of mind, and enable us to look forward, with animating hope, toward those happy regions of tranquillity and joy, which shall then be allotted for our perpetual inheritance.

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THE
POWER OF RELIGION
ON THE
M I N D.

A TESTIMONY from the wise and experienced King SOLOMON, to the insufficiency of the most splendid possessions, and the greatest external prosperity, to produce true and permanent happiness, or to support and relieve the mind in seasons of distress, may suitably introduce these Memoirs.

This illustrious prince, who, at one season of his life, had flattered himself with great enjoyments from the world; and who, better than most men, could compute their amount, gives us the result of his experience in these memorable lines:—"I said in my heart, I will prove thee
"with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and be-
"hold, this also is vanity. I said of laughter, it

“is mad; and of mirth, what doth it. I made
“me great works, builded houses, planted vine-
“yards, made gardens and orchards, planted trees
“in them of all kind of fruit: I got me servants
“and maidens, also great possessions: I gathered
“me silver and gold, and the peculiar treasures
“of kings and provinces; also men and women
“singers, and the delights of the sons of men, as
“musical instruments, and that of all sorts. So I
“was great, and increased more than all that were
“before me in Jerusaleme, and whatsoever mine
“eyes desired, I kept not from them; I withheld
“not mine heart from any joy. Then I looked
“on the works which my hands had wrought,
“and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of
“spirit.”

After this representation, he concludes with recommending the great end of our being, as that which will confer upon us here, the highest enjoyment and dignity of our nature, and prepare us for endless felicity hereafter:—“Fear
“God and keep his commandments, for this is
“the whole duty of man: for God shall bring
“every work into judgment, whether it be good,
“or whether it be evil.”

IGNATIUS, who lived within the first hundred years after Christ, (and who was torn in pieces by wild beasts at Rome, for his religion,) left this saying, amongst others worthy of attention, behind him:—"There is nothing better than the "peace of a good conscience:"—intimating, there might be a peace to wicked consciences, that are past feeling any thing to be evil, being hardened in the wickedness of the world.

In his epistle to the churches at Ephesus, Magnesia, Trallis, and Rome, upon his martyrdom, he triumphantly says;—"Now I begin to be a "disciple; I weigh neither visible nor invisible "things, so that I may gain Christ."

JUSTIN MARTYR, a philosopher, who received Christianity five and twenty years after the death of Ignatius, declares, in the relation of his conversion to the Christian faith,—“That the power “of godliness in a plain simple Christian, had “that influence and operation on his soul, that he “could not but betake himself to a serious and “strict life.”

Eusebius relates of him——“ That though he
“ was a follower of Plato’s doctrine, yet, when
“ he saw the Christians’ piety and courage, he
“ concluded, that no people were so temperate,
“ less voluptuous, and more intent upon divine
“ things;”—and this consideration first induced
him to become a Christian.

He continued faithful to his profession; and it
gave him joy at his martyrdom, that he had spent
his days as a serious teacher, and a good example.

EUGENIUS IV. Pope of Rome, was the son of
Angelo Condelmerio, but his proper name was
Gabriel. He ascended the Papal Throne from a
low condition in life; and afterwards experienced,
in the wars and tumults of his day, much of the
vicissitudes of this world, and the insufficiency of
power and splendour to confer true peace and
enjoyment of mind.

The reflection he is said to have made on his
death-bed, is remarkable. Being surrounded by a
company of monks, with a voice interrupted by
sighs, and his face turned towards them, he said:
——“ O Gabriel, how much better would it have
“ been for thy soul’s health, hadst thou never been

"raised to the Purple or Pontificate; but continued a religious life in thy monastery."

CHARLES V. Emperor of Germany, King of Spain, and Lord of the Netherlands, was born at Ghent in the year 1500.

He is said to have fought sixty battles, in most of which he was victorious; to have obtained six triumphs, conquered four kingdoms, and to have added eight principalities to his dominions. An almost unparalleled instance of worldly prosperity, and the greatness of human glory.

But all these fruits of his ambition, and all the honours that attended him, could not yield him true and solid satisfaction. Reflecting on the evils and miseries which he had occasioned, and convinced of the emptiness of earthly magnificence, he became disgusted with all the splendour that surrounded him, and thought it his duty to withdraw from it, and spend the rest of his days in religious retirement. Accordingly, he voluntarily resigned all his dominions to his brother and son; and after taking an affectionate and last farewell of his son, and a numerous re-

tinue of princes and nobility that respectfully attended him, he repaired to his chosen retreat; which was situated in a vale in Spain, of no great extent, watered by a small brook, and surrounded with rising grounds covered with lofty trees.

A deep sense of his frail condition and great imperfections, appears to have impressed his mind in this extraordinary resolution, and through the remainder of his life. As soon as he landed in Spain, he fell prostrate on the ground, and considering himself now as dead to the world, he kissed the earth, and said,—"Naked came I out
"of my mother's womb, and naked I now return
"to thee, thou common mother of mankind!"

In this humble retreat he occupied his time in religious exercises and innocent employments; and buried here, in solitude and silence, his grandeur, his ambition, together with all those vast projects, which, for near half a century, had alarmed and agitated Europe; filling every kingdom in it, by turns, with the terror of his arms, and the dread of being subjected to his power. Far from taking any part in the political transactions of the world, he restrained his curiosity even from any inquiry concerning them; and he seemed to view the busy scene which he had

abandoned; with an elevation and indifference of mind, arising from his thorough experience of its vanity, as well as from the pleasing reflection of having disengaged himself from its cares and temptations.

Here he enjoyed more complete contentment, than all his grandeur had ever yielded him; as a full proof of which he has left this short, but comprehensive testimony, viz.—“That he had
“tasted more satisfaction in his solitude, in one
“day, than in all the triumphs of his former reign;
“and that the sincere study, profession, and
“practice of the Christian religion, had in it
“such joys and sweetnesss as courts were strangers to.”

JANE, QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

THIS excellent Queen was the daughter of Henry II. King of Navarre, and of Margaret of Orleans, sister to Francis I. of that name, King of France.

From her childhood she was carefully educated in the Protestant religion, to which she stedfastly

adhered all her days. Bishop Burnet says of her,—" That she both received the reformation, and brought her subjects to it. That she not only reformed her court, but her whole principality, to such a degree, that the Golden Age seemed to have returned under her; or rather, Christianity appeared again with the purity and lustre of its first beginnings."

This illustrious queen being invited to attend the nuptials of her son and the King of France's sister, fell a sacrifice to the machinations and cruelty of the French court against the Protestant Religion.

That religious fortitude and genuine piety, with which she was endued, did not, however, desert her in this great conflict, and at the approach of death.

To some that were about her, near the conclusion of her time, she said;—" I take all this as sent from the hand of God, my most merciful Father: nor have I, during this extremity, feared to die, much less murmured against God for inflicting this chastisement upon me; knowing that whatsoever he does with me, he so orders it, as that, in the end, it shall turn to my everlasting good."

When she saw her ladies and women weeping about her bed, she blamed them, saying,—
“ Weep not for me, I pray you ; for God doth,
“ by this sickness, call me hence to enjoy a better
“ life ; and now I shall enter into the desired
“ haven, towards which this frail vessel of mine
“ hath been a long time steering.”

She expressed some concern for her children, as they would be deprived of her in their tender years ; but added,—“ I doubt not but God
“ himself will be their Father and Protector, as
“ he hath ever been mine in my greatest afflictions ; therefore I commit them wholly to his
“ government and fatherly care. I believe that
“ Christ is my only Mediator and Saviour, and I
“ look for salvation from no other. O my God !
“ in thy good time, deliver me from this body
“ and death, and from the troubles of this present life, that I may attain to the felicity which
“ thou hast promised to bestow upon me.”

CARDINAL WOLSEY, the favourite of Henry VIII. was the most absolute and wealthy minister of state this kingdom ever had ; and he ap-

peared in his time to govern Europe as well as England. He was the greatest instance which many ages had produced, of the variety and inconstancy of human things, both in his rise and fall. He held a great number of offices in the government, and his annual income was so extensive, that it exceeded the revenues of the crown.

But from this great height of power and splendour he was suddenly precipitated, being arrested for high treason, and deprived of all his employments; which sad reverse so affected his mind, that it soon produced a severe illness, which put a period to his days. A short season before he left the world, the review of his life, and a sense of the misapplication of his time and talents, drew from him this sorrowful declaration:—"Had I been as diligent to serve my God, as I have been to please my king, he would not have left me now in my grey hairs."—An affecting admonition to those, who have the power and means of doing more than ordinary good in the world, and do it not; which seems to have been the melancholy case and reflection of this great man.

SIR PHILIP SIDNEY was a person universally admired for his talents, knowledge, and polite attainments. He was a subject of England, but was honoured with an offer of the crown of Poland. Queen Elizabeth used to call him her "Philip;" and the Prince of Orange, his "Master."—Lord Brooks was so proud of his friendship, that he would have it part of his epitaph,—“Here lies Sir Philip Sidney’s friend:” and, as a testimony of respect for his memory, his death was lamented, in verse, by the Kings of France and Scotland, and by the two Universities of England.

This great and accomplished person, on a just estimate of things, near the time of his decease, perceived that, at that solemn period, when the mind is looking round for support and consolation, all the honours and distinctions of the world were fruitless and unavailing.

His advice and observations, on taking his last leave of his friends, are worthy of remembrance: “Love my memory; cherish my friends; their faith to me may assure you that they are honest. But, above all, govern your wills and affections, by the will and word of your Creator. In me, behold the end of this world, and all its vanities.”

In this admired character, may be seen the imperfection of great natural powers, the most polite learning, and the highest worldly accomplishments. His farewell seems to have been spoken without terror, with a composed spirit, and sound understanding.

SIR FRANCIS WALSINGHAM, one of the most refined and penetrating statesmen that are known in history, flourished in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and had a great share in promoting and accomplishing the extraordinary measures which distinguished that illustrious reign.

When he approached the evening of life, he became deeply impressed with a solemn sense of the superior importance of religion to all other considerations; and in a letter to his fellow-secretary Burleigh, Lord Treasurer of England, he addressed him in the following manner:—
“ We have lived enough to our country, our fortunes, our sovereign: it is high time we begin to live to ourselves, and to our God.”—This giving occasion for some court-droll to visit and try to divert him,—“ Ah !” said he, “ while we

“ laugh, all things are serious round about us ;
“ God is serious who preserveth us, and hath
“ patience towards us ; Christ is serious who shed
“ his blood for us ; the Holy Ghost is serious
“ when he striveth with us ; the whole creation
“ is serious in serving God and us ; they are serious in hell and in heaven ; how then can we
“ be gay ?”

ANNA MARIA SCHURMAN was born at Cologne, in the year 1607. The powers of her understanding were very great, and she employed them in the acquisition of a large stock of literature.— She was skilled in many languages; and the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, were so familiar to her, that she not only wrote, but spoke them fluently, to the surprise of the most learned men. She had also a competent knowledge of the liberal arts and sciences; and was held in high reputation by several persons of the greatest learning of her day.

In the latter part of her time, she became more religiously disposed, and expressed a desire to lay down all the glory she had acquired by means of

these accomplishments, that so she might obtain the favour of God, as her principal treasure and cause of rejoicing.

After this change of sentiments she wrote an account of her life in Latin, which contains some remarkable circumstances concerning herself, and some other religious persons with whom she was connected.

During her last illness, she declared her full satisfaction in the religious choice she had made. After suffering much from the disorder, she expressed herself in the following manner :—" I have proceeded one step further towards eternity, and if the Lord shall please to increase my pains, it will be no cause of sorrow ; the will of my God is all to me ; I follow him. How good is it to be in the hands of God ! But it will be still better for me, when I shall enjoy more full communion with him, among the children of God, in the abodes of the blessed. I have nothing more to desire in this world."

In the last night of her life, she said to one who watched with her,—" I hear a voice almost continually sounding in the ear of my mind, on this wise, a Christian must suffer. This voice (she added) comforts me in pains, and

“ supports me that I faint not. O how good it is
“ to remain in silence and patience before God !
“ My most beneficent Father has not dealt with
“ me as with his servant Job, whose friends were
“ with him seven days in silence, and then addressed him with bitter words. But how sweet
“ and full of comfort are the words which are
“ spoken to me !”

A STRONG testimony to the superior excellency of religion, and to the vanity and unsatisfactoriness of worldly enjoyments, is given by Sir JOHN MASON, who, though but 63 years old at his death, yet had flourished in the reigns of four princes, (Henry VIII. Edward VI. Queens Mary and Elizabeth)—had been privy-counsellor to them all, and an eye-witness of the various revolutions and vicissitudes of those times. Towards his latter end, being on his death-bed, he spoke thus to those about him :—“ I have lived to see five
“ princes, and have been privy-counsellor to four
“ of them. I have seen the most remarkable
“ things in foreign parts, and have been present
“ at most state transactions for thirty years toge-

“ther: and I have learned this after so many
“years experience; that feriousness is the greatest
“wisdom, temperance the best physic, and a good
“conscience the best estate. And, were I to live
“again, I would change the court for a cloister,
“my privy-counsellor’s bustle for a hermit’s re-
“tirement, and the whole life I have lived in the
“palace, for an hour’s enjoyment of God in the
“chapel. All things else forsake me, besides my
“God, my duty, and my prayers.”

SIR WALTER RALEIGH, who lived in the times of Queen Elizabeth and King James, is an eminent instance of true fortitude of mind. He was well descended; of a capacious understanding, and sound judgment. He was learned, wise, and brave; a historian, a philosopher, a general, a statesman. After a long life, full of experience, he addressed the following excellent advice, a little before his death, to his son and to his wife:

“My son, seek not riches basely, nor attain
“them by evil means: destroy no man for his
“wealth, nor take any thing from the poor; for

“ the cry thereof will pierce the heavens; and it
“ is most detestable before God, and most disho-
“ nourable before worthy men, to wrest any
“ thing from the needy and labouring soul: God
“ will never prosper thee if thou offendest therein;
“ but use thy poor neighbours and tenants well.
“ Have compassion on the poor and afflicted, and
“ God will bless thee for it: make not the
“ hungry soul sorrowful; for if he curse thee in
“ the bitterness of his soul, his prayer shall be
“ heard of him that made him.

“ Now, for the world, dear child, I know it too
“ well to persuade thee to dive into the practices
“ of it: rather stand upon thy own guard
“ against all those that tempt thee to it, or may
“ practise upon thee, whether in thy conscience,
“ thy reputation, or thy estate. Resolve, that no
“ man is wise or safe, but he that is honest.
“ Serve God; let him be the author of all thy
“ actions; commend all thy endeavours to him,
“ that must either wither or prosper them.
“ Please him with prayer; lest if he frown, he
“ confound all thy fortune and labour, like the
“ drops of rain upon the sandy ground. Let my
“ experienced advice and fatherly instructions
“ sink deep into thy heart: so God direct thee

"in all thy ways, and fill thy heart with his
"grace."

HIS LETTER TO HIS WIFE AFTER HIS CON-
DEMNATION.

"You shall receive, my dear wife, my last words, in these my last lines. My love I send you, which you may keep when I am dead; and my counsel, that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not, with my will, present you sorrows, dear wife; let them go to the grave with me, and be buried in the dust; and seeing that it is not the will of God that I shall see you any more, bear my destruction patiently, and with a heart like yourself. First, I send you all the thanks which my heart can conceive, or my words express, for your many travails and cares for me: for though they have not taken effect, as you wished, yet my debt to you is not the less; but pay it I never shall in this world. Secondly, I beseech you, for the love you bear me living, that you do not hide yourself many days; but by your travails seek to help my miserable fortunes, and the right of your poor child: your mourning cannot avail me who am but dust. Thirdly, you shall understand, that my lands were conveyed,

bona fide, to my child ; the writings were drawn at Midsummer was a twelve month, as divers can witness ; and I trust my blood will quench their malice who desired my slaughter, that they will not seek to kill you and yours with extreme poverty.

“ To what friend to direct you, I know not ; for all mine have left me in the true time of trial. Most sorry am I, that being surpris'd by death, I can leave you no better estate ; God hath prevented all my determinations ; that great God, which worketh all in all. If you can live free from want, care for no more, for the rest is but vanity. Love God, and begin by times ; in him shall you find true and endless comfort : when you have travailed and wearied yourself with all sorts of worldly cogitations, you shall sit down by sorrow in the end. Teach your son also to fear and serve God whilst he is young, that the fear of God may grow up in him ; then will God be a husband to you, and a father to him ; a husband and father that can never be taken from you.

“ Dear wife, I beseech you, for my soul's sake, pay all poor men. When I am dead, no doubt you will be much sought unto ; for the world

thinks I was very rich : have a care of the fair pretences of men ; for no greater misery can befall you in this life, than to become a prey unto the world, and after to be despised. As for me, I am no more yours, nor you mine : death has cut us asunder, and God hath divided me from the world, and you from me. Remember your poor child, for his father's sake, who loved you in his happiest state. I sued for my life, but, God knows, it was for you and yours that I desired it : for know it, my dear wife, your child is the child of a true man, who in his own respect despiseth death, and his mis-shapen and ugly forms. I cannot write much ; God knows how hardly I steal this time, when all are asleep : and it is also time for me to separate my thoughts from the world. Beg my dead body, which living was denied you ; and either lay it in Sherborne, or in Exeter church, by my father and mother.

“ I can say no more ; time and death call me away. The everlasting God, powerful, infinite, and inscrutable ; God Almighty, who is goodness itself, the true light and life, keep you and yours, and have mercy upon me, and forgive my persecutors and false accusers, and send us to meet in his glorious kingdom. My dear wife, farewell !

blefs my boy, pray for me, and let my true God hold you both in his arms.

“Yours that was, but not now mine own,

“WALTER RALEIGH.”

CATHARINE BRETTERG was born in Cheshire, about the year 1580, and was the daughter of John Bruen, Esq. of Bruen Stapleford. From a child, she was much employed in reading the Holy Scriptures, which she found of great use and comfort to her. She was moderate and sober in the enjoyment of the good things of this life; and carefully avoided the vain pleasures and fashions in which many greatly delight themselves. The society of religious people was very comfortable and pleasant to her; and it appears that, from her childhood to the end of her days, she was concerned to live in the fear of God, and to walk before him with a perfect heart.

This excellent woman, in the beginning of her last sickness, was permitted to labour under great exercise and conflict of spirit; but she was mercifully supported under this trial; and the victory was, in due time, graciously given her.

Her dependence on the Fountain of Wisdom and Strength, for relief from this trying state of mind, is evidenced by the following pious and fervent prayer:—"O Lord God of my salvation, help my weakness; plead thou my cause, O God of Truth, for in thee do I trust. O blessed Saviour, perfect the work, I humbly beseech thee, which thou hast begun in me!"

At another time, after she had experienced deliverance from this conflict, she expressed herself in the following manner:—"Oh, my God, blessed be thy name for evermore, who hast shewed me the path of life. Thou didst, O Lord, hide thy face from me for a little season, but with everlasting mercy thou hast had compassion on me. And now, blessed Lord, thy comforting presence is come; yea, Lord, thou hast had respect to thy handmaid, and art come with fullness of joy and abundance of consolation."

When she was near her end, her strength and voice being very feeble, she lifted up her eyes, and with a sweet countenance, and still voice, said,—“My warfare is accomplished, and my iniquities are pardoned. Lord, whom have I in heaven but thee? And I have none on earth

“besides thee. My flesh faileth, and my heart
“also; but God is the strength of my heart, and
“my portion for ever. He that preserveth Ja-
“cob, and defendeth his Israel, he is my God,
“and will guide me unto death. Guide me, O
“Lord my God, and keep my soul in safety.”

Presently after these words, without any motion of body, she yielded up her soul in peace to her Creator.

LOUIS, DUKE OF ORLEANS.

THIS illustrious person, strongly impressed with the importance of religion, gave the following testimony to the comfort which he had found in piety and virtue:—“I know by experience,
“that sublunary grandeur, and sublunary pleasure are delusive and vain; and are always infinitely below the conceptions we form of them: but, on the contrary, such happiness, and such complacency may be found in devotion and piety, as the sensual mind has no idea of.”

EXTRACT OF A LETTER, WRITTEN BY THE EARL OF ESSEX, TO HIS PARTICULAR FRIEND THE EARL OF SOUTHAMPTON, SOME TIME BEFORE HIS DEATH.

“ With respect to your natural gifts and abilities, remember, First, that you have nothing which you have not received. Secondly, that you possess them, not as a lord over them, but as one who must give an account for them. Thirdly, if you employ them to serve this world, or your own worldly delight, which the prince of this world will seek to entertain you with, it is ingratitude, it is injustice, yea, it is perfidious treachery: for what would you think of such a servant of yours, who should convert your goods, committed to his charge, to the advantage or service of your greatest enemy? And what do you less than this with God; since you have all from him, and know that the world and the prince thereof, are at continual enmity with him.— Therefore, if ever the admonition of your truest friend shall be heard by you; or if your country, which you may serve in so great and many things, be dear unto you; if your God, whom you must (if you deal truly with yourself) acknowledge to be powerful over all, and just in all, be feared by

you; yea, if you be dear unto yourself, and prefer an everlasting happiness before a pleasant dream, out of which you must shortly awake, and then repent in the bitterness of your soul: if any of these things be regarded by you, then, I say, call yourself to account for what is past; cancel all the leagues you have made, without the warrant of a religious conscience; make a regular covenant with your God, to serve him with all your natural and spiritual, inward and outward gifts and abilities: and then he, who is faithful and cannot lie, and hath promised to honour, those who honour him, will give you that inward peace of soul, and true joy of heart, which, till you have, you will never rest; and which, when you have, you shall never be shaken; and which you can never attain to any other way.

“ESSEX.”

HENRY, Prince of Wales, eldest son to King James the First, of whom many excellent things are recorded, had, notwithstanding, when he drew near his conclusion, to lament the misimprovement of his time. A person whom he

loved, and who had been the companion of his diversions, being with him in his sickness, and asking him,—“How he did,”—was, amongst many other sober expressions, answered thus:—
“Ah, Tom! I in vain wish for that time I lost
“with thee and others, in vain recreations.”—
So affecting was the remembrance of vain recreations, and so precious was time to a prince, and no ordinary one neither, upon a dying-bed.

But why wished he, as others have done, for more time, but that it might be better employed? The holy Spirit of God, throughout all generations, has convinced numbers upon their dying-beds, of their vanity and folly, who, before, were too much occupied with temporal pursuits, to mind the great concerns of eternity. But when their days were almost numbered; when mortality hastened on them; when the revelation of the righteous judgment was at the door, and all their worldly recreations and enjoyments must be parted with; O then! the holy witness had room to plead with conscience: then, nothing, but a pure, strict, and religious life, was valuable; then all the world for a little time, though before they had given all their time for a little of a vain world.

But if so short a representation of the inconsistency of the vanities of the world, with the Christian life, could make so deep an impression, as it has upon numbers, at that awakening period; to what a noble stature had they been grown, in pious and heavenly knowledge; and how much greater had their rewards been, if they had seasonably relinquished those perishing entertainments of the world, and given their minds to the tuition and guidance of that grace of God, which had so long shined in darkness, uncomprehended of it, and which was at last but just perceived, to give a sight of what they had been doing all their days!

What a source of consolation must it be, in the evening of life, to know that we have timely laboured to improve our talents, and to have our lamps burning! But how unspeakably distressing, at that season, to look back on repeated convictions of mind, and numerous admonitions, disregarded; and to reflect, that——“the summer
“is ended, the harvest is over, and we are not
“gathered!”

JOHN, LORD HARRINGTON, was the eldest son of that Lord Harrington, to whom King James the First committed the education of his eldest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth.

He had excellent natural endowments, and had acquired a considerable stock of useful learning; but was mostly eminent for his knowledge in the work of his salvation.

He manifested a principle of real charity in his heart, by his love to all who were truly religious. And so great was his compassion for his fellow-creatures in necessity, that he gave the tenth-part of his yearly income to charitable uses.

At the beginning of his last sickness, he strongly apprehended that death would be the end of it, and accordingly prepared for the grave.

He declared his faith in Christ, and undoubted hope of salvation by him; and said, with much cheerfulness, that——“he feared not death, in what shape soever it might assail him.”——In the midst of many heavenly things, which, from time to time, dropped from his mouth, he desired to be dissolved, and to be at home with the Lord; declaring, not above two hours before his death, that——“he still felt the comfort and joys of assured salvation, by Christ Jesus.”——

And when the hour of his departure was come, he said,—“O, that joy! O, my God! when shall I be with thee?”—And with the like words, expressive of a tender heavenly frame of mind, he peacefully expired.

SIR HENRY WOTTON, an Englishman, eminent for learning and his knowledge in state affairs, was born in the year 1568. He was many times employed as ambassador to several of the European states, and discharged the trust reposed in him, with ability, and to the satisfaction of the King. He enjoyed the favour of James, and was much esteemed and admired by his contemporaries. Notwithstanding these honours, he declared, that—“It was the greatest happiness of his life, to be at leisure to be, and to do good.—Though he was esteemed for sobriety and wisdom, yet towards the end of his days, when he reflected on his past time, he was accustomed to repeat this interesting declaration: —“How much time have I to repent of, and “how little to do it in!”

SIR CHRISTOPHER HATTON, a little before his death, advised his relations to be serious in the search after—"the will of God in the "holy word: For," said he, "it is deservedly "accounted a piece of excellent knowledge to "understand the law of the land, and the customs of a man's country; how much more so "to know the statutes of heaven, and the laws "of eternity, those immutable and eternal laws "of justice and righteousness;—to know the will "and pleasure of the great Monarch and universal King of the world:—I have seen an end of "all perfection, but thy commandments, O God! "are exceeding broad."

Whatever knowledge of other things we may possess, if we know not ourselves, it will be found at last unavailing. Could we, by a vast and penetrating mind, comprehend all the knowledge of art and nature; could we acquire all languages, and sound the depth of all arts and sciences; could we describe the interest of all states, the intrigues of all courts, the reason of all civil laws and constitutions, and give an account of all histories; and yet not know the Author of our being, and the Preserver of our lives, our sovereign, and our judge; our best friend, and surest

refuge in trouble; our future happiness, and our portion for ever; we do but, with a great deal of knowledge, go down to destruction.

SIR THOMAS SMITH was born in the year 1514, and received a liberal and polished education. In 1542, he was made King's Professor of Civil Law, in the University of Cambridge, and Chancellor of the diocese of Ely. He was several times employed by Queen Elizabeth as her Ambassador to the Court of France, and executed the high office of Secretary of State to that princess.

This great man, being much affected with the prospect of his dissolution, and a future state, a short time before his decease, sent to his friends the Bishops of Winchester and Worcester; and intreated them to state to him from the holy Scriptures, the plainest and surest way of making his peace with God; adding, that——“it was lamentable, that men considered not for what end
“they were born into the world, till they were
“ready to go out of it.”

It is truly a sorrowful reflection, that the pursuits of this life, and the love of the world, are

often so much indulged, as to captivate the mind, and charm it into a state of insensibility to the great end of its existence. How much wiser and happier should we be, if we engaged in temporal concerns with moderation and restraint, the true way to extract all their good, and considered ourselves as strangers and pilgrims travelling towards a better country; instead of being occupied, under continual anxiety and frequent disappointments, in the delusive chase of interest and pleasure, till the scene is nearly closed, and the mind left to the anguish of a melancholy retrospect!

The flood of time is fast approaching, and will soon pass over us, and bury, in silence and oblivion, all our busy fascinating schemes and engagements; and leave nothing to survive the wreck, but virtue and goodness, and the consciousness of Divine Favour. What urgent motives for correcting our terrestrial aims and labours, and for striving to become heirs of that kingdom, whose honours and enjoyments are perfect, and will last for ever!

DOCTOR DONNE, was a person of great parts and learning, and in particular favour with King James the First, as well as much respected and visited by the great men of his day. When the time of his departure from this world drew near, being upon his death-bed, and taking a solemn farwel of his friends, he made this weighty declaration to them:—"I repent of all my life, " but that part of it which I spent in communion with God, and in doing good."

PHILIP III. King of Spain, when he drew near the end of his days, seriously reflecting on his past life, and greatly affected with the remembrance of his mispent time, expressed his deep regret in these terms:—"Ah! how happy would it have been " for me, had I spent these twenty-three years, " that I have held my kingdom, in a retirement!"

The following declaration, made to his confessor, shews that, at this period, he perceived the divine protection and favour to be the only source of consolation and support:—"My concern is " for my soul, not for my body. I lay all that God " has given me, my dominion, power, and my " life, at the feet of Jesus Christ my Saviour."

GONDAMOR, Philip the Third's Ambassador in England, and held the ablest man of his time, was a person who took great freedom with religion in his politics, and scrupled not to serve his ends by any means that would conveniently accomplish them.

Towards his latter end, he grew very thoughtful of his former conduct; and after all his negotiations and successes in business, he became so humbled, under a sense of his weakness and errors, that he said to one of his friends;—"I fear nothing in the world more than sin."—And he often declared, that—"he had rather endure hell than sin."—So clear and strong were his convictions, and so exceedingly sinful did sin appear to him, upon a serious consideration of his ways.

LADY JANE GREY.

THIS excellent personage was descended from the Royal Line of England by both her parents.

She was carefully educated in the principles of the Reformation; and her wisdom and virtue rendered her a shining example to her sex. But

it was her lot to continue only a short period on this stage of being ; for, in early life, she fell a sacrifice to the wild ambition of the Duke of Northumberland ; who promoted a marriage between her and his son, Lord Guilford Dudley, and raised her to the throne of England, in opposition to the rights of Mary and Elizabeth. At the time of their marriage she was only about eighteen years of age, and her husband was also very young : a season of life very unequal to oppose the interested views of artful and aspiring men, who, instead of exposing them to danger, should have been the protectors of their innocence and youth.

This extraordinary young person, besides the solid endowments of piety and virtue, possessed the most engaging disposition, the most accomplished parts ; and being of an equal age with King Edward VI. ; she had received all her education with him, and seemed even to possess a greater facility in acquiring every part of manly and classical literature. She had attained a knowledge of the Roman and Greek languages, as well as of several modern tongues ; had passed most of her time in an application to learning ; and expressed a great indifference for other occupations.

and amusements usual with her sex and station. Roger Ascham, tutor to the Lady Elizabeth, having at one time paid her a visit, found her employed in reading Plato, while the rest of the family were engaged in a party of hunting in the park; and upon his admiring the singularity of her choice, she told him, that she “received
“more pleasure from that author than the others
“could reap from all their sport and gaiety.”— Her heart, replete with this love of literature and serious studies, and with tenderness towards her husband, who was deserving of her affection, had never opened itself to the flattering allurements of ambition; and the information of her advancement to the throne was by no means agreeable to her. She even refused to accept of the crown; pleaded the preferable right of the two Princesses; expressed her dread of the consequences attending an enterprize so dangerous, not to say so criminal; and desired to remain in that private station in which she was born. Overcome at last with the entreaties, rather than reasons, of her father and father-in-law, and, above all, of her husband, she submitted to their will, and was prevailed on to relinquish her own judgment. But this honour was of very short continuance. The nation de-

clared for Queen Mary; and the Lady Jane, after wearing the vain pageantry of a crown during ten days, returned to a private life, with much more satisfaction than she felt when the royalty was tendered to her.

Queen Mary, who appears to have been incapable of generosity or clemency, determined to remove every person, from whom the least danger could be apprehended. Warning was, therefore, given the Lady Jane to prepare for death; a doom which she had expected, and which the innocence of her life, as well as the misfortunes to which she had been exposed, rendered no unwelcome news to her. The Queen's bigotted zeal, under colour of tender mercy to the prisoner's soul, induced her to send clergymen, who molested her with perpetual disputation; and even a reprieve of three days was granted her, in hopes that she would be persuaded, during that time, to pay, by a timely conversion to Popery, some regard to her eternal welfare. The Lady Jane had presence of mind, in those melancholy circumstances, not only to defend her religion by solid arguments, but also to write a letter to her sister, in the Greek language; in which, besides sending her a copy of the Scriptures in that tongue, she exhorted her to

maintain, in every fortune, a like steady perseverance. On the day of her execution, her husband, Lord Guilford, desired permission to see her; but she refused her consent, and sent him word, that the tenderness of their parting would overcome the fortitude of both, and would too much unbend their minds from that constancy, which their approaching end required of them.—Their separation, she said, would be only for a moment; and they would soon rejoin each other in a scene, where their affections would be for ever united, and where death, disappointment, and misfortunes could no longer have access to them, or disturb their eternal felicity.

It had been intended to execute the Lady Jane and Lord Guilford together on the same scaffold, at 'Tower-hil'; but the Council, dreading the compassion of the people for their youth, beauty, innocence, and noble birth, changed their orders, and gave directions that she should be beheaded within the verge of the Tower. She saw her husband led to execution; and having given him from the window some token of her remembrance, she waited with tranquillity till her own appointed hour should bring her to a like fate. She even

saw his headless body carried back in a cart; and found herself more confirmed by the reports, which she heard of the constancy of his end, than shaken by so tender and melancholy a spectacle. Sir John Gage, constable of the Tower, when he led her to execution, desired her to bestow on him some small present, which he might keep as a perpetual memorial of her. She gave him her table-book, where she had just written three sentences, on seeing her husband's dead body; one in Greek, another in Latin, a third in English. The purport of them was, "that human justice was against his body, but the Divine Mercy would be favourable to his soul; and that if her fault deserved punishment, her youth, at least, and her imprudence were worthy of excuse; and that God and posterity, she trusted, would shew her favour." On the scaffold, she made a speech to the bye-standers, in which the mildness of her disposition led her to take the blame entirely on herself, without uttering one complaint against the severity with which she had been treated.→ She said, that her offence was not having laid her hand upon the crown, but not rejecting it with sufficient constancy: that she had less erred through ambition than through reverence to her

parents, whom she had been taught to respect and obey : that she willingly received death, as the only satisfaction which she could now make to the injured state ; and though her infringement of the laws had been constrained, she would shew, by her voluntary submission to their sentence, that she was desirous to atone for that disobedience, into which too much filial piety had betrayed her : that she had justly deserved this punishment for being made the instrument, though the unwilling instrument, of the ambition of others : and that the story of her life, she hoped, might at least be useful, by proving that innocence excuses not great misdeeds, if they tend any way to the destruction of the commonwealth.—After uttering these words, she caused herself to be disrobed by her women, and with a steady, serene countenance submitted herself to the executioner.

We shall conclude the account of this virtuous and excellent young person, with a few remarks respecting her, made by Bishop Burnet :—"She read," says he, "the Scriptures much, and had attained great knowledge of religious subjects. But with all her advantages of birth and parts, she was so humble, so gentle, and pious, that

all people both admired and loved her. She had a mind wonderfully raised above the world, and at the age, when others are but imbibing the notions of philosophy, she had attained to the practice of the highest precepts of it. She was neither lifted up with the hope of a crown, nor cast down, when she saw her palace made afterwards her prison, but carried herself with an equal temper of mind in those great inequalities of fortune, that so suddenly exalted and depressed her. All the passion which she expressed in it was that which is of the noblest sort, and which is the indication of tender and generous natures, being much affected with the troubles into which her husband and father fell on her account. She rejoiced at her approaching end, since nothing could be to her more welcome, than to be delivered from this valley of misery into that heavenly throne to which she was to be advanced."

CARDINAL RICHLIEU was a native of France, and born in the year 1585. He was a great favourite of the King, and was advanced by him

to be his first Minister of State. Being a man of prodigious capacity, and of a restless and insatiable ambition, he formed to himself vast designs; and this rendered his life a series of agitations and inquietudes. But after he had given law to all Europe for many years, and had arrived at the cool and retrospective period, he confessed to old Peter de Moulin, the famous French Protestant, that—
“being forced upon many irregularities, by that
“which they call reason of state, he could not
“tell how to satisfy his conscience for several
“things; and therefore had many temptations
“to doubt and disbelieve a God, another world,
“and the immortality of the soul, thereby to
“relieve his mind from any disquiet, but in vain:
“So strong,” he said, “was the notion of God
“on his soul, so clear the impression of him upon
“the frame of the world, so unanimous the consent of mankind, so powerful the convictions
“of his own conscience, that he could not but
“taste the power of the world to come—and so
“live as one that must die; and so so die, as one
“that must live for ever.”

The solemn state of his mind being observed by one who came to see him, he was asked, “why he was so sad?” to which he replied:—

“The soul is a serious thing; it must either be
“sad here, for a moment, or be sad for ever.”

CARDINAL MAZARINE, first Minister of State in France, was conspicuous for the greatness of his abilities, and his knowledge of the world.—He was reputed to be the most profound statesman of his time, and gave great proofs of it in the successes of the French crown, under his ministry.

His aim was the grandeur of the world, to which he made all other considerations submit: but, poor man! he was of another mind, a short time before his death; for being awakened by the smart lashes of conscience, which represented his soul's condition to be very dismal, with astonishment and tears he cried out,——“O my
“poor soul! what will become of thee? Whither
“wilt thou go?”

To the Queen Mother of France, who came to visit him, and who had been his friend at court, he expressed himself in these terms:——

“Madam, your favours have undone me: were

“ I to live again, I would be a capuchin, rather
“ than a courtier.”

OXENSTIERN, Chancellor of Sweden, was a person of the first quality, station, and ability in his own country; and his share and success, not only in the chief ministry of affairs in that kingdom, but in the greatest negotiations of Europe during his time, made him no less considerable abroad.

Being visited in his retreat from public business, by Commissioner Whitlock, Ambassador from England to Queen Christiana, in the conclusion of their discourse he said to the Ambassador;—“ I have seen much, and enjoyed much
“ of this world, but I never knew how to live
“ till now. I thank my good God, who has
“ given me time to know him, and to know myself. All the comfort I have, and which is
“ more than the whole world can give, is—feeling the good Spirit of God in my heart, and
“ reading in this good book, (holding up the
“ Bible) that came from it.”

This enlightened and experienced man further addressed the Ambassador as follows:—" You
" are now in the prime of your age and vigour,
" and in great favour and business; but all this
" will leave you, and you will one day better understand and relish what I say to you; and
" then you will find, that there is more wisdom,
" truth, comfort, and pleasure, in retiring and
" turning your heart from the world, to the good
" Spirit of God, and in reading the Bible, than
" in all the courts and favours of princes."—
" This I had, (says William Penn) as near as I
am able to remember, from the Ambassador's
own mouth, more than once. A very remarkable and edifying account, when we consider from whom it came, one of the greatest and wisest men of his age, while his understanding was as sound and vigorous, as his experience and knowledge were great."

JOHN SELDEN, a native of Suffex, and born in the year 1584, was one of the greatest scholars and antiquaries of his time, insomuch, that he

was styled—"The great Dictator of Learning to the English Nation."—He laboriously employed himself in taking an extensive survey of the knowledge and learning, which had been possessed by the Jews, Heathens, and Christians.

This celebrated man, towards the end of his days, in a conference with Bishop Usher, declared, that—"notwithstanding he had been so laborious in his inquiries, and curious in his collections, and had possessed himself of a treasure of books and manuscripts upon all ancient subjects; yet he could rest his soul on none, save the Scriptures:"—and that above all, that passage lay most remarkably upon his spirit; *Titus* ii. 11, 12, &c.—"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works"—And, indeed, it is one of the most comprehensive passages in the Scriptures; for it

comprises the end, the means, and the recompence of Christianity.

HUGO GROTIUS, a native of Holland, was born in the year 1583. He is said to have possessed the brightest genius ever recorded of a youth, in the learned world. Nature bestowed on him a great comprehension, a solid judgment, and a wonderful memory; and these extraordinary natural endowments, had all the advantages that education could confer upon them. In short, he was a person of very eminent talents, and he is highly celebrated for his extensive learning, and universal knowledge:—"He was a light,"—say the Statesmen; "A light,"—say the Churchmen too; witness his annals, and his work, "*De Jure Belli et Pacis*;" his "*Truth of the Christian Religion*," and elaborate "*Commentaries on the Scriptures*."

After all his attainments, reputation, and labours, he winds up his life and choice in this memorable declaration:—"I would give all my learning and honour, for the plain integrity of

“ John Urick, who was a religious poor man, that
“ spent eight hours of his time in prayer, eight in
“ labour, and but eight in meals, sleep, and other
“ necessaries.”

To one that admired his great industry, he returned an answer, to this effect:—Ah! I
“ have consumed much of my life, in laboriously
“ doing nothing.”—And to another, that inquired of his wisdom and learning, what course to take, he solemnly answered,—“ Be serious.”

In his last sickness, which was of short duration, he appears to have been tranquil, and resigned to the will of God. He expressed his faith in Jesus Christ, and declared, that his hope rested upon him. To one that mentioned to him the Publican spoken of in the Gospel, he humbly replied,—“ I am that Publican;”—and soon after expired.

Without a particular allusion to the case of this distinguished person, whose literary labours have been highly useful to the world, we may remark, that when great talents and learning are, from pure motives, and in true humility, consecrated to the service of truth and religion, they become acceptable offerings in the divine sight, and often eminently promote the good of

mankind. But when we misapply these qualifications, make them subservient to pride and vanity, or attribute to them an efficacy in producing virtue and happiness, that does not belong to their nature; they occasion us to consume our time in earnestly doing nothing, or that which is worse than nothing; and they lay the foundation for bitter regret in the winding up of life.

The worth and importance of those advantages are lamentably over-rated, if our estimation of them is so high, and pursuit so ardent, as to dispose us to undervalue, to postpone, or disregard, that most interesting injunction of our Lord;—
“Seek ye first (early, and in preference to all other things) the kingdom of God, and his righteousness:—remembering that this is—
“the one thing needful.”

Whilst the mind is occupied with the variety and intricacy of speculation and literary engagements, and the heart elated with the flattering distinctions which they produce, we may not be sufficiently aware of the tendency to that fatal effect: but when the close of our day approaches, and the retrospect of life is made; when the ardour of pursuit has abated, and the delusions of vanity and passion are at an end; we shall

form a true estimate of the worth of all sublu-
nary attainments and possessions. We shall then,
if not before, perceive that, to have our conversa-
tion in the world, with simplicity and godly sin-
cerity; to receive the kingdom of heaven as a
little child; and to secure an incorruptible and
immortal inheritance; are things of infinitely
greater moment, than merely to possess all the
accomplishments of mind and body that this
world can bestow.

As it is, therefore, our highest wisdom, may
it also be our greatest concern, seasonably to an-
ticipate these reflections; and so to temper and
regulate all our studies, and all the engagements
of this life, that they may co-incide with, and
promote the great end of our being!

SALMASIUS, a man of very uncommon abilities,
and extensive erudition, was descended of an an-
cient and honourable family in France. He
wrote many volumes of literature, and acquired
a celebrated name in the republic of letters. In
short, he was esteemed to be the most consum-
mate scholar of his time.

When he arrived at the evening of life, and had to reflect on the work of his day, he acknowledged, that he had mistaken true learning, and that in which solid happiness consisted; and exclaimed thus against himself:——“ Oh ! I
“ have lost a world of time ; time that most precious thing in the world ! whereof, had I but
“ one year more, it should be spent in David’s
“ Psalms, and Paul’s Epistles. Oh ! Sirs,” said he, to those about him, “ mind the world less,
“ and God more : The fear of the Lord, that is
“ wisdom ; and to depart from evil, that is understanding.”

A. RIVETUS was a man of great understanding, and much revered in the Dutch nation. After a long life of study, in search of divine knowledge, being on his death-bed, and conversing upon heavenly things, he brake forth in this manner:——“ God has taught me more of
“ himself in ten days sickness, than I could obtain by all my labour and studies. He has
“ made me go home into myself, where I was
“ not before ; for I was in the world. But I

“am now in the school of the Lord.”—Plain and simple are the means to the knowledge of God and his holy will, when we come to be in earnest, and our hearts are sincerely concerned to know and obey it:—“The wayfaring man, though a fool, (in the world’s wisdom) shall not err therein.”

WILLIAM COWPER, Bishop of Galoway, when near the end of his days, thus expressed his religious faith and hope, to his weeping friends around him:—“Death is somewhat dreary; and the streams of that Jordan between us and our Canaan, run with great force; but they stand still when the ark comes.”

When the concluding scene of life is approaching, under the trials and distresses peculiar to that affecting period, the most powerful, and indeed the only true support and consolation, will be found in the sense of Divine Favour, and in a steady faith, that all our sorrows will terminate with time, and our spirits be admitted into that kingdom, where we shall live and rejoice for ever.

SIR HENRY VANE was born about the year 1612, and was possessed of abilities of the first rate, and an extensive knowledge of mankind.

In his youth he was too much addicted to company, and cared little for serious things; but on reading a book, entitled—"The Signs of a Godly Man,"—and being convinced that they were just, but that he had no share in any of them, he fell into such extreme anguish and horror, that for some days and nights, he took little food or rest. This at once dissolved his old friendships; and made those religious impressions and resolutions, which neither university, courts, princes, nor parents, nor any losses nor disappointments that threatened his new course of life, could weaken or alter. And though this laid him under some disadvantages for a time, yet his great integrity and abilities broke through that obscurity; so that those of very different sentiments did not only admire him, but very often desired him to accept the most eminent negotiations of his country; which he served, according to his own principles, with great success, and a remarkable self-denial.

This great man's maxim was,—"Religion
"is the best master, and the best friend; for it

“ makes men wise, and will never leave them
“ that never leave it;”—which he found true
in himself: for it made him wiser than those that
had been his teachers, and gave him a support
and hope that could not be shaken. This was
the judgment, as well of foreigners, as of others,
who had the curiosity to see him die: at which
awful season, he verified some former meditations
of his own, viz.—“ The day of death is the
“ judge of all our other days; the very trial and
“ touchstone of the actions of our lives. It is
“ the end that crowns the work; and a good
“ death honoureth a man’s whole life. The
“ fading corruption and loss of this life, is the
“ passage into a better. Death is no less essential
“ to us, than to live, or to be born. In flying
“ death, thou fleest thyself; thy essence is equally
“ parted into these two,—life and death. It is
“ no small reproach to a Christian, whose faith is
“ in immortality, and the blessedness of another
“ life, to fear death much, which is the ne-
“ cessary passage thereunto.”

ADMIRAL PENN, after thirty years employment in several places of eminent trust and honour, upon serious reflection, not long before his death, spoke to one of his sons in this manner: —“ Son William, I am weary of the world; “ I would not live over my days again, if I “ could command them with a wish; for the “ snares of life are greater than the fears of “ death. This troubles me, that I have offended “ a gracious God, who has followed me to this “ day. O, have a care of sin! That is the sting “ both of life and death. Three things I commend “ to you: First, let nothing in this world tempt “ you to wrong your conscience; I charge you, “ do nothing against your conscience: so will “ you keep peace at home, which will be a feast “ to you in the day of trouble. Secondly, whatever you design to do, lay it justly, and time “ it seasonably; for that gives security and despatch. Lastly, be not troubled at disappointments; for if they may be recovered, do it; “ if they cannot, trouble is vain. If you could “ not have helped it, be content: there is often “ peace and profit in submitting to Providence; “ for afflictions make wise. If you could have “ helped it, let not your trouble exceed instruc-

“tion for another time. These rules will carry
“you with firmness and comfort through this
“inconstant world.”

A noble young man of the family of HOWARD, who had in health too much yielded to the temptations of youth, when laid upon a sick-bed, which proved his dying-bed, fell under the power and agony of strong convictions. In the remembrance of his former extravagances, he deeply bewailed his condition, and cried earnestly to God to forgive him, abhorring his sinful course of life, and promising amendment if it should please him to restore his health. But having, after great conflict of mind, tasted of the love and forgiveness of God, he became willing to die; and warned his acquaintance and kindred who came to see him,—“to fear God, and to
“forsake the pleasures and vanity of this world:”
—And thus, in hope of the Divine Mercy and Favour in a better life, he yielded up his soul to HIM that gave it, and was delivered from the troubles of time, and the frailties of mortality.

PRINCESS ELIZABETH of the Rhine claims a place in this collection. Her virtue gave a greater lustre to her name, than her quality, though that was eminent in the German empire. She had a small territory, which she governed so well, that she shewed herself fit for a greater. She constantly, every last day in the week, sat in judgment, and heard and determined causes herself; on which occasion, her patience, justice, and mercy, were admirable: and she frequently remitted her forfeitures, where the party was poor, or in any respect meritorious. And, which was excellent, though unusual, she often tempered her discourses with religion, and charitably drew the concerned parties to submission and agreement; exercising, not so much the rigour of her power, as the power of her persuasion.

“ Her meekness and humility (says W. Penn) appeared to me extraordinary; she did not consider the quality, but the merit, of the people she entertained. Did she hear of a retired man, hid from the world, and seeking after the knowledge of a better, she was sure to set him down in the catalogue of her charity, if he wanted it. I have casually seen, I believe, fifty tokens sealed and superscribed to the several poor subjects of her

bounty, whose distances would not suffer them to know one another, though they knew her, whom yet some of them had never seen. Thus, though she kept no sumptuous table in her own court, she spread the tables of the poor in their solitary cells; breaking bread to virtuous pilgrims, according to their want, and her ability.

“She was abstemious in her living, and in apparel void of all vain ornaments. I must needs say, that her mind had a noble prospect: her eye was to a better and more lasting inheritance, than can be found below; which made her not over-rate the honours of her station, or the learning of the schools, of which she was an extraordinary judge. Being once at Hamburgh, a religious person, whom she went to see for religion’s sake, remarked to her, that——“It was
“too great an honour for him, that he should
“have a visitant of her quality come under his
“roof, who was allied to so many great kings
“and princes of this world;”——to which she humbly replied,——“If they were godly, as well
“as great, it would be an honour indeed; but if
“you knew what that greatness was, as well as I
“do, you would value less that honour.”

“ Being in some agony of spirit, after a religious meeting we had in her chamber, she said,—

“ It is a hard thing to be faithful to what one knows: O, the way is strait! I am afraid I am not weighty enough in my spirit to walk in it.”

“ She once withdrew, on purpose to give her servants the liberty of discoursing with us, that they might the more freely put what questions of conscience they desired to be satisfied in, for they were religious: and at times she suffered both them and the poorest of her town, to sit by her in her own bed-chamber, where we had two meetings. I cannot forget her last words, when I took my leave of her:—“ Let me desire you to remember me, though I live at this distance, and that you should never see me more. I thank you for this good time; and know and be assured, though my condition subjects me to divers temptations, yet my soul hath strong desires after the best things.”

“ She lived a single life till about sixty years of age, and then departed at her own house in Herwerden, in the year 1680, as much lamented, as she had lived beloved, by the people: to whose real worth I do, with a religious gratitude for her kind reception, dedicate this memorial.

“ W. PENN.”

DU RENTI was a young nobleman of France, who was not more distinguished by his high birth, than by excellent talents and qualifications of mind. This accomplished youth, touched with a sense of the vanity of worldly grandeur, and the sweetness of a retired and religious life, thought it his duty, notwithstanding the honours and employments that waited for him, to withdraw from those scenes, which he feared would ensnare and corrupt his heart, in order that he might enjoy a life of more communion with God.

The following sentiments shew him to have been a man, whose mind was much redeemed from the spirit and enjoyments of this world; and who laboured, above all things, for a heavenly frame and temper, and a holy, acceptable walking in the Divine Sight.

“ Since the time that I gave up my liberty to
“ God, I perceived to what a state of deep hu-
“ miliation the soul must be brought, to render
“ it capable of union with him. I beheld my-
“ self as if encompassed with whatever the world
“ loves and possesses; and, as it were, a hand re-
“ moving all this far from me. The splendour
“ and vain enjoyments of this transitory scene,

“are great incumbrances to my soul in her endeavours to obtain the favour of God; of which, therefore, his pleasure is that she be stripped, in order to arrive at that state of humility and poorness of spirit, which will bring her into possession of real honour and solid riches.

“I find no security in any state, but in this of dying to the world, and in true self-abasement: this is to be baptized into Christ’s death, and to live the life of Christian self-denial. All that can be imagined to befall us in this lower world, is of small concernment, though it were the losing of all our possessions. Had we but a little faith, and a little love, how happy should we find ourselves in being willing to resign up every thing; and in saying,—*My God, and my All!*”

How conformable are these sentiments to the divine injunction,—“Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world”—“But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” It is, indeed, a holy and happy state, to be living above the world, and pressing after perfection, at the same time that we gratefully acknowledge

Divine Goodness, in providing for our necessities during our passage through life.

This supreme love of God, and desire to be united to him, though it is often cherished by retirement, is not a solitary and inactive principle : It will not only purify and exalt the mind ; it will also expand it towards its fellow-creatures, and lead it forth into acts of charity and beneficence to all men.

A LETTER FROM JAMES, EARL OF MARLBOROUGH, A LITTLE BEFORE HIS DEATH, IN THE BATTLE AT SEA, ON THE COAST OF HOLLAND, &c.

“ I BELIEVE the goodness of your nature, and the friendship you have always borne me, will receive with kindness the last office of your friend. I am in health enough of body, and, through the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, well disposed in mind. This I premise, that you may be satisfied that what I write proceeds not from any fantastic terror of mind, but from a sober resolution of what concerns myself, and an earnest desire to do you more good after my death,

than my example, (God of his mercy pardon the badness of it!) in my life-time, may do you harm.

“ I will not speak aught of the vanity of this world: your own age and experience will save that labour. But there is a certain thing that goes up and down the world, called Religion, dressed, and set out fantastically, and to purposes bad enough, which yet by such evil dealing, loseth not its being. The great good God hath not left it without a witness, more or less, sooner or later, in every man's bosom, to direct us in the pursuit of it, and for the avoiding of those inextricable disquisitions and entanglements, with which our own frail reason would perplex us. God, in his infinite mercy, hath also given us his holy word, in which as there are many things hard to be understood, so there is enough plain and easy, to quiet our minds, and to direct us concerning our future being. I confess to God and you, I have been a great neglecter, and, I fear, despiser of it; God, of his infinite mercy, pardon me the dreadful fault! But, when I retired myself from the noise and deceitful vanity of the world, I found no true comfort in any other resolution than what I had from thence.

I commend, from the bottom of my heart, the same to your, I hope, happy use.

“Dear Hugh, let us be more generous than to believe we die as the beasts that perish; but with a Christian, manly, brave resolution, look to what is eternal. The only great and holy God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, direct you to a happy end of your life, and send us a joyful resurrection. So prays your true friend,

“MARLBOROUGH.”

When our taste for compositions of any sort, or our pursuits in life, are such as occasion us to contemn or neglect the Holy Scriptures, and the simplicity of the Gospel, it is a sad proof that the mind has begun to be perverted, and that the way is prepared for great depravity of heart. Whatever, therefore, tends to lessen our esteem for, and perusal of, those venerable and highly interesting communications of the Divine Will, should be regarded with early apprehension, and avoided with the utmost solicitude.

JOHN JANEWAY was a person remarkable for his piety and love of mankind, his exemplary conduct through life, and happy triumphant decease. He was born in Hertfordshire, in the year 1633, and was blessed with the privilege of a descent from pious parents.

At about twelve years of age, he had made a considerable proficiency in the mathematics, in the science of astronomy, and in other branches of useful literature. At the age of seventeen, he was chosen to King's College in Cambridge; and when he was about eighteen, it pleased Divine Goodness to open his understanding, and to discover to him, that the knowledge of his Creator, and the consciousness of an interest in his love, through Jesus Christ, was infinitely superior to every attainment and possession of this world.

At this time he became sensible that astronomy surveyed but a molehill, in comparison of that which the religion of Jesus contemplates. He was now so filled with divine contemplations, and tasted so much sweetness in a religious life, that it was discernible in his very countenance: and though he had a just sense of the value of learning and knowledge, yet he now "counted
" every thing but as dross and dung, in compari-

“son of the knowledge of Christ, and him crucified.”

From this period of his life to the conclusion of it, he continued to rise above the world, and to labour for purity of heart, and acceptance in the Divine Sight.

As his own comforts came from the source of all consolation, so he was desirous of leading others to partake of that fountain, and to depend upon it for support:—“We poor foolish creatures (said he, on a particular occasion,) scarce know what is good for ourselves; but it is no small encouragement to the people of God, that wisdom itself is their guard, and that one who loves them better than they love themselves, looks after them.”

When he fell into a decline, and had but little prospect of life, he was far from being alarmed with the view of his dissolution:—“He was ashamed” he said, “to desire and pray for life. Is there any thing here more desirable than the enjoyment of Jesus Christ? Can I desire any thing below comparable to that blessed vision? O that crown! that rest which remains for the people of God! and, blessed be God, I can say, I know it is mine.”

It was his custom to set apart an hour every day, for secret retirement and solemn meditation. On one of these occasions, a friend of his, unknown to him, happened to be in a situation, where he observed all that passed, and his remarks on the scene before him, are worthy of insertion.—“What a spectacle did I behold! “Surely, a man walking with God, conversing “intimately with him, and maintaining a holy “freedom with the great Jehovah. Methought “I saw a spiritual merchant in a heavenly exchange, pursuing a rich trade for the treasures “of the other world. O what an animating “sight it was! methinks I see him still. How “lovely was his countenance! His looks, and “smiles, and every motion, spoke him to be upon “the confines of glory.”

He was full of love and compassion to the souls of men; and often greatly lamented the barrenness of Christians in their converse with each other. “O,” said he, “what indifference, “to spend an hour or two together, and to hear “scarce a word that speaks people’s hearts in “love with holiness! Where is our love to God “and our fellow-creatures all this while? Where “is our sense of the preciousness of time? Of

“ the greatness of our account ? Should we talk
“ thus, if we believed we should hear of it again
“ at the day of judgment ? Doth not this speak
“ aloud our hearts to be very empty of grace,
“ and that we have little sense of spiritual and
“ eternal concerns.”

To a friend who visited him, and who spoke of the excellency of Christ, and of the glory of the invisible world, he replied ; “ Ah ! I feel something of it. My heart is as full as it can hold
“ in this lower state.”

Though he was generally, towards his end, in a triumphant frame of spirit, yet he experienced at times some variations : and in these seasons, he used to say, “ Hold out, faith and patience,
“ yet a little while, and your work is done.”

Near the close of life, most of his work was praise. Admiring the boundless love of God to him, he said, “ O, why me, Lord ? why me ?
“ Praise is now my work, and I shall be engaged
“ in that sweet employment for ever. O, help
“ me to praise him. I have nothing else to do.
“ I have done with prayer ; I have almost done
“ with conversing with mortals. I shall soon be
“ beholding Christ himself, that died for me, and
“ loved me, and washed me in his blood. I shall

“ shortly be in eternity, singing the song of Moses, and the song of the Lamb. I shall presently stand upon Mount Sion, with an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect. I shall hear the voice of multitudes, and be one amongst them who say;—‘ Hallelujah! glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God!’ ”

Thus did this favoured and happy spirit take his leave of this world, and rise triumphant to the regions of bliss and immortality. He died in the twenty-fifth year of his age.

BULSTRODE WHITLOCK was a man in high office, and of very great abilities; a scholar, a lawyer, a statesman; in short he was one of the most accomplished men of the age*.

In his retirement from the world, being visited by a friend, he, among other serious observations, expressed himself in the following manner:—

“ I have ever thought there has been but one true religion in the world, and that is the work

* See a further account of him, page 36.

“ of the Spirit of God in the hearts and souls of
“ men. There have been, indeed, divers forms
“ and shapes of things, through the many dis-
“ pensations of God to men, answerable to his
“ own wise ends, in reference to the low and
“ uncertain state of man in the world. The
“ old world had the Spirit of God, and the new
“ world has the same Spirit, both Jew and Gen-
“ tile, and it strives with all; and they who
“ have been led by it, have been the good people
“ in every dispensation of God to the world.
“ And I myself must say, that I have felt it from
“ a child to convince me of my evil and vanity;
“ and it has often given me a true measure of
“ this poor world, and some taste of divine
“ things; and it is my grief that I did not more
“ early apply my soul to it: for I can say, that,
“ since my retirement from the greatness and
“ hurries of the world, I have felt something of
“ the work and comfort of it; and that it is both
“ ready and able to instruct, and lead, and pre-
“ serve those who will humbly and sincerely
“ hearken to it. So that my religion is, the
“ good Spirit of God in my heart; I mean, what
“ that has wrought in me and for me.”

ANTHONY LOWTHER, was a person who possessed an excellent understanding, and great sweetness of disposition; to which was added the advantage of a sober and guarded education. Notwithstanding these privileges, when he came of age to be under his own government, he was seduced by the men of pleasure of the town, into its customary liberties and dissipations; and he appears to have been as much a judge as any one, of the satisfaction which that way of life could yield. But, some time before his last sickness, with a clear and awakened judgment, he frequently condemned his own misconduct, and lamented the unchristian indulgencies which so much abounded in the world. These sentiments were strengthened by the instruction of a long and severe illness; which caused him earnestly to aspire after the knowledge of the best things, and to seek the best company; and disposed him to lose as little time as possible, that he might redeem the time he had lost.

He often, with a lively relish, bore testimony to the truth and excellence of religion, from the sense which he had of it in his own breast; and frequently declared,——“He knew no joy
“comparable to that of being assured of the love

“and mercy of God.”—And as he often implored divine favour, with strong convictions, and deep humility and reverence, so he frequently experienced the comfort of it before the period of his days. It was usual with him to press his relations and friends, in a most serious and affectionate manner,—“to love God, and one another more, and this poor world less.”—And this he had so much at heart, that it was almost always the conclusion of his religious discourses with his family.

He sometimes said, that—“though he could have been willing to have lived, if God had pleased, to see his younger children nearer a settlement in life; yet he felt no desire to live longer in the world, but on the terms of living better in it: for he did not only think virtue the safest, but the happiest way of living;”—And he recommended and enjoined the love and practice of it to his children, upon his last blessing.

JANE RATCLIFFE (who was born in the year 1638) deserves a place in these memoirs, being a religious and exemplary woman, and one who

appears to have been favoured with great strength and steadiness of hope and faith, that, through Divine Mercy, all things would work together for her preservation, and final well-being.

In early life, she indulged herself in many of the follies and vanities of her time ; but from these ensnaring allurements she came to be redeemed, and to have her desires and affections set upon solid and permanent enjoyments. We shall pass over the intermediate parts of her circumspect life, and come to the closing scene of it ; at which time, or when in prospect of it, she appeared to be much raised above the love of life, and the fears of death. The following is an extract from her own expressions, on that solemn occasion. At the same time that they manifest her willingness and desires to be released from the sorrows and dangers of mortality, there can be no doubt but they were limited by a humble submission, and pious resignation, to the will of the gracious and wise Disposer of all events.

“ I desire to die”—said she—“ because I want, while I live here, the glorious presence of God, which I love and long for ; and that sweet fellowship of angels and saints, who would be as glad to see me with them, as I should be

“to see them about me; and who would entertain me with unwearied delight.

“I desire to die—because, while I live, I shall want the perfection of my nature, and be as an estranged and banished child from my father’s house.

“I desire to die—because I would not live to offend so good a God, and grieve his Holy Spirit. For his loving-kindness is better than life, and he is abundant in mercy to me; and it often lies as a heavy load upon my heart, to think of displeasing him.

“I desire to die—because this world is generally infected with the plague of sin, and I myself am tainted with the same disease: so that, while I live here, I shall be in danger of being infected, or of infecting others. And if this world hates me, because I endeavour to follow goodness, how would it rejoice, if my foot should slip? How woful would my life be to me, if I should give occasion to the world to triumph and blaspheme? There are in my nature so many defects, insufficiencies, mistakings, and transgressions, that I may say with David, innumerable evils have compassed me about; my iniquities have taken hold on

“ me, so that I am not able to look up. I there-
“ fore desire heaven for holiness, and to the end
“ I may sin no more.

“ I desire to die—because nothing in this world
“ can give me solid and durable contentment.

“ With regard to my children, I am not trou-
“ bled: for that God who hath given them life
“ and breath, and all they have, while I am
“ living, can provide for them when I am dead.
“ My God will be their God, if they be his;
“ and if they be not, what comfort would it be
“ for me to live to behold it? Life would be
“ bitter to me, if I should see them dishonour
“ God, whom I so greatly love.

“ I fear not death—because it is but the sepa-
“ ration of the soul from the body; and that is
“ but a shadow of the body of death: *Romans vii.*
“ 24. Whereas the separation of the soul from
“ God by sin, and of soul and body for sin, is
“ death indeed: *Isa. lix. 2.*

“ I fear not death—because it is an enemy that
“ hath been often vanquished; and because I
“ am armed for it; and the weapons of my war-
“ fare are mighty through God, and I am assured
“ of victory.

“ I do not fear death for the pain of it; for I

“ am persuaded I have endured as great pain in
“ life, as I shall find in death ; and death will cure
“ me of all sorts of pain. Besides, Christ died
“ a terrible death, to the end any kind of death
“ might be blessed to me. And that God who
“ hath greatly loved me in life, will not neglect
“ me in death, but will, by his Spirit, succour
“ and strengthen me all the time of the combat.”

For her comfort in her last hours, she put into the following form some memoirs of the principal mercies and blessings she had received from God.

“ How shall I praise God for my conversion ?
“ For his word, both in respect of my affection
“ to it, and the wonderful comforts I have had
“ from it ? For hearing of my prayers ? For
“ godly sorrow ? For fellowship with the godly ?
“ For joy in the Holy Ghost ? For the desire of
“ death ? For contempt of the world ? For private helps and comforts ? For giving me some
“ strength against my sin ? For preserving me
“ from gross evils, both before and after my
“ calling ?”

In her last sickness, which was of long continuance, she often desired to be dissolved ; imploring God, in the words of David,——“ Make

“haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation! Be
“pleased, O Lord, to deliver me! O Lord, make
“haste to help me!”——And she was relieved in
the tenderest manner; for her spirit departed
from the body, when it was thought she was only
fallen asleep.

Sir MATTHEW HALE, Lord Chief Justice of
England, was born in Gloucestershire, in the
year 1609, and, by the care of a wife and reli-
gious father, had great attention paid to his edu-
cation.

In his youth, he was fond of company, and
fell into many levities and extravagances. But
this propensity and conduct were corrected by
a circumstance, that made a considerable im-
pression on his mind during the rest of his life.
Being one day in company with other students,
one of the party, through excess of wine, fell
down (apparently dead) at their feet. Young
Hale was so affected on this occasion, that he im-
mediately retired to another room, and shutting
the door, fell on his knees, and prayed earnestly
to God that his friend might be restored to life,

and that he himself might be pardoned for having given countenance to so much excess.

At the same time he made a solemn vow, that he would never again keep company in that manner, nor—"drink a health"—while he lived. His friend recovered, and he religiously observed his vow to the day of his death. After this event, there was an entire change in his disposition; he forsook all dissipated company, and was careful to divide his time between the duties of religion, and the studies of his profession.

He became remarkable for his solid and grave deportment, his inflexible regard to justice, and a religious tenderness of spirit, which appear to have accompanied him through life. His retired meditations on religious subjects, manifest a pious and humble frame of mind, and contain a solemnity well-adapted to excite kindred emotions in the breast of the reader.

We shall select a few of these, as the testimonies of this great and good man to the power and efficacy of religion, as the guide, support, and comfort of our lives.

"True religion (saith he) teaches the soul a high veneration of Almighty God; a sincere and upright walking, as in the presence of the invi-

sible, all-seeing God. It makes a man truly love, honour, and obey him, and therefore careful to know what his will is. It renders the heart highly thankful to him, as his Creator, Redeemer, and Benefactor. It makes a man entirely depend on him, seek him for guidance, direction, and protection, and submit to his will with patience and resignation of soul. It gives the law, not only to his words and actions, but to his very thoughts and purposes; so that he dares not entertain any which are unbecoming the sight and presence of that God, to whom all our thoughts are legible. It crushes all pride and haughtiness, both in a man's heart and carriage, and gives him a humble frame of soul and life, both in the sight of God and men. It regulates and governs the passions of the mind, and brings them into due moderation and frame. It gives a man a right estimate of this present world, and sets the heart and hopes above it; so that he never loves it more than it deserves. It makes the wealth, and the glory of this world, high places, and great preferments, but of low and little value to him; so that he is neither covetous, nor ambitious, nor over-solicitous, concerning the advantages of them. It makes him value

the love of God and peace of conscience, above all the wealth and honour in the world, and to be very diligent to keep it inviolably. He performs all his duties to God in sincerity and integrity; and, whilst he lives on earth, his conversation, his hopes, his treasures, are in heaven, and he endeavours to walk suitably to such a hope."

Of the inward direction and assistance of the Spirit of God to the soul, he declares as follows:

"Those who truly fear God, have a secret guidance from a higher wisdom than what is barely human, namely, the Spirit of Truth and Wisdom, that doth really and truly, but secretly, prevent and direct them. Any man that sincerely and truly fears Almighty God, and calls and relies upon him for his guidance and direction, hath it as really as a son hath the counsel and direction of his father: and though the voice be not audible, nor the direction always perceptible, or discernible to sense, yet it is equally as real as if a man heard the voice, saying,—“This is the way—walk in it.”

“And though this secret direction of Almighty God is principally seen, in matters relating to the good of the soul; yet it may also be found

in the concerns of this life, which a good man, that fears God, and begs his direction, shall very often, if not at all times, find. I can call my own experience to witness, that, even in the external actions of my whole life, I was never disappointed of the best guidance and direction, when I have, in humility and sincerity, implored the secret direction and guidance of the Divine Wisdom.

“The observance of the secret admonition of this Spirit of God in the heart, is an effectual means to cleanse and sanctify our hearts; and the more it is attended to, the more it will be conversant with our souls, for our instruction.—In the midst of difficulties, it will be our counsellor; in the midst of temptations, it will be our strength, and grace sufficient for us; in the midst of troubles, it will be our light and our comforter.

“It is impossible for us to enjoy that which must make us happy, till we are deeply sensible of our own emptiness and nothingness, and our spirit thereby brought down and laid in the dust. The Spirit of Christ is a humbling spirit, the more we have of it, the more it will humble us; and it is a sign that either we have it not, or that

it is yet over-mastered by our corruptions, if our heart be still haughty.

“ Watch, therefore, the secret persuasion, and dissuasions of the Spirit of God, and let us beware that we quench it not, nor grieve it. This wind that blows where it lists, if shut out or resisted, may haply never breathe upon us again, but leave us to be hardened in our sins; but if observed and obeyed, we shall be sure to have it for our monitor and director, upon all occasions: when we go out, it will lead us, when we sleep, it will keep us, and when we awake, it will talk with us.”

Of the vicissitude of temporal enjoyments, and of his own experience thereof, he gives a striking testimony in the following lines.

“ I HAVE, in the course of my life, had as many stations and places as most men. I have been in almost continual motion; and although, of all earthly things, I have the most desired rest and retiredness, and a fixed private station, yet the various changes that I have seen and found, the public employments that, without my seeking, and against my inclination, have been put upon me, and many other interventions, as well

private as public, have made it literally my experience, that I have had no continuing city or place of habitation. When I had designed for myself a settled mansion in one place, and had fitted it to my convenience and repose, I have been presently constrained by my necessary employments, to leave it, and repair to another: and when again I had thoughts to find repose there, and had again fitted it to my convenience, some other necessary occurrences have diverted me from it. And thus, by several vicissitudes, my dwellings have been like so many inns to a traveller, though of longer continuance, yet of almost equal instability and vicissitude.

“This unsettledness of station, though troublesome, hath given me a good and practical moral; namely, that I must not expect my rest in this lower world, but must make it as the place of my journey and pilgrimage, not of my repose and rest, but must look further for that happiness. And truly, when I consider, that it hath been the wisdom of God Almighty, to exercise those worthies whom he left as patterns to the rest of mankind, with this kind of discipline, I have reason not to complain of it as a difficulty or an inconvenience; but to be thankful to him for it,

as an instruction and document, to put me in remembrance of a better home, and to incite me to make a due provision for it, even that everlasting rest which he hath provided for them that love him; and by pouring me thus from vessel to vessel, to keep me from fixing myself too much upon this world below.

“ But the truth is, did we consider this world as becomes us, even as wise men, we might easily find, without the help of any discipline of this nature, that this world below neither was intended for, nor indeed can be, a place of rest; but only as a laboratory to fit and prepare the souls of the children of men, for a better and more abiding state; as a school, to exercise and train us up in habits of patience and obedience, till we are fitted for another station; as a little narrow nursery, wherein we may be dressed and pruned, till transplanted into a better paradise.

“ The continual troubles and discomposures, sicknesses and calamities, that attend our lives; the shortness and continued vexations occurring in them; and, finally, the common examples of death and mortality of all ages, sexes, and conditions of mankind, are a sufficient instruction to convince reasonable men, who have the serious-

ness and patience to consider and observe, that we have no abiding city here. And on the other side, if we will but give ourselves leisure to consider the great wisdom of Almighty God, who orders every thing in the world to ends suitable and proportionable; the excellence of the soul and mind of man; the great advances and improvements his nature is capable of; the admirable means which the merciful and wise God hath afforded mankind, by his works of nature and providence, by his word and instruments, to qualify him for a nobler life than this world below can yield, we shall readily confess, that there is another state, another city to come, which it becomes every good, and wise, and considerate man, to look after and fit himself for. And yet, if we look upon the generality of mankind with a due consideration, they will appear to be like a company of distempered people.—The greatest part of them make it their whole business to provide for a rest and happiness in this world; they make these vain acquisitions of wealth and honour, and the preferments and pleasures of this world, their great, if not their only business and happiness; and, which is yet a higher degree of frenzy, they esteem this the

only wisdom, and think that the careful provision for eternity, is the folly of a few weak, melancholy, fanciful men: whereas it is a truth, and in due time it will evidently appear, that those men who are most solicitous for the attaining of their everlasting rest, are the only true wise men, and so shall be acknowledged by those that now despise them. ‘We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honour: how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints!’” *Wisdom*, v. 4.

ANNE BAYNARD was descended from an ancient and respectable family in England, and was born in the year 1672. She possessed an enlarged understanding, was skilled in the learned languages, and had made considerable acquisitions in the arts and sciences. She took great delight in the pursuit of learning and knowledge, and seemed to think it was a sin to be contented with little; and yet when she came seriously to appreciate the worth of things, and to compare the highest accomplishments of this life, with the value of Divine Peace, and the hope of eter-

nal happiness, she declared, "that she counted all things but loss, in comparison of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus her Lord;"—"That human learning was worth but little, unless it served as a handmaid to the knowledge of Christ revealed in the Gospel, as our only Lord and Saviour."—"What avails," said she, "Solomon's skill in all the works of nature, if by them we are not brought to see the God of nature?"—"What is it to be so skilful in astronomy, or the knowledge of the heavens, as that we can foretel things to come, if we never study, by our holy practice, to arrive at those blessed regions?"—"What is it to be so skilful in arithmetic, as that we can divide and subdivide to the smallest fractions, if, as God hath revealed unto us in his holy word, we do not so learn to number our days, that we may apply our hearts to wisdom?"—"What is it for a physician to be so skilful in preventing or curing the diseases of the body, if he knows not where to find the balm of Gilead, the wine and oil of the good Samaritan, the Lord Jesus Christ, to pour into the wounds of his soul?"

This excellent woman had a great contempt for the vanities of the world, especially for the

gaities and splendour of life. She had a high veneration for the sacred name of God, and made it her great business to promote his honour and glory. But the period of her life and labours was of short duration, being only about twenty-five years of age when she died.

JOHN, EARL OF ROCHESTER.

AN illustrious and instructive instance of the Power of Religion on the Mind, in the time of sickness and death, is John, Earl of Rochester. He was the descendant of a great family, was liberally educated, and possessed great personal accomplishments; in short,—(as it is judiciously expressed of him)—“he was a very great man every way; a great wit, a great scholar, a great poet, a great sinner, and a great penitent.”

Such he is described to be by two eminent men, who personally knew him, and attended him in his last sickness. In this instance God has shewn the richness of his mercy, to save one who seemed to have made a covenant with death, and

to be at an agreement with hell. His case appears to be somewhat similar to that of the Apostle Paul, who, though before a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, yet obtained mercy, that in him Christ Jesus might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them that should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life, 1 *Tim.* i. 13, 16. He was, as it were, struck to the ground, by a light from heaven, and a voice of thunder round about him; infomuch, that now the scales fell from his eyes, as they once did from Paul's; his stony heart was softened, and streams of tears flowed from him; the bitter, but wholesome, tears of true repentance.

He had advanced to an uncommon height of impiety, having been an advocate in the black cause of Atheism. He had raked too in the very bottom of the jakes of debauchery, and had been a satirist against virtue. But when, like the prodigal in the gospel, he came to himself, great horror filled his mind, and forced sharp and bitter invectives from him, against himself; terming himself the vilest wretch that ever the sun shone upon; wishing he had been a beggar, a link-boy, or a crawling leper in a ditch, or had

lived in a dungeon, rather than have offended the Lord as he had done.

Being at one time under great trouble of mind, and his conscience full of terror, he told the person who attended him, that——“when on his
“journey, he had been arguing with greater
“vigour against God and religion, than he had
“ever done in his life-time before, and that he
“resolved to run them down, with all the argu-
“ments and spite in the world; but, like the
“great convert, Paul, he found it hard to resist
“the Lord:”——For his heart was at that time struck so powerfully, that he argued as much for God and virtue, as ever he had done against them.

He was, at times, under the influence of a strong sense of the Divine Majesty, mingled with delightful contemplations of his nature and perfections, and of the amiableness of religion. Speaking of one of these impressions, he said:—
“I never was advanced thus far towards happi-
“ness in my life before; though upon the com-
“mission of extraordinary sins, I have had some
“considerable checks and warnings from within;
“but I still struggled with them, and so wore
“them off again. One day, at an Atheistical

“ meeting, at the house of a person of quality, I
“ undertook to manage the cause, and was the
“ principal disputant against God and piety;
“ and, for my performances, received the ap-
“ plause of the whole company. Upon which
“ my mind was terribly struck, and I immedi-
“ ately replied thus to myself,—‘ Good God!
“ that a man who walks upright, who sees the
“ wonderful works of God, and has the use of
“ his senses and reason, should use them to the
“ defying of his Creator!’—But though this
“ was a good beginning towards my conversion,
“ to find my conscience touched for my sins, yet
“ it went off again. All my life long, I had a
“ secret value and reverence for an honest man,
“ and loved morality in others. But I had
“ formed to myself an odd scheme of religion,
“ which would solve all that God, or conscience,
“ might force upon me; and I was never well
“ reconciled to the business of Christianity, nor
“ had that reverence for the gospel of Christ,
“ which I ought to have had.”

This uncertain state of mind, with respect to the truth of Christianity, continued till the 53d chapter of Isaiah was read to him, together with some other parts of the sacred Scriptures; when

it pleased God to fill his mind with such peace and joy in believing, that it was remarkable to all about him. And he frequently desired those who were with him, to read the 53d of *Isaiah* to him; upon which he used to descant in a solemn and affecting paraphrase, applying the weighty sentences thereof to his own humiliation and comfort.

“ Oh ! blessed God ! can such a horrid creature as I am, be accepted by thee, who have denied thy being, and contemned thy power ? Can there be mercy and pardon for me ? Will God own such a wretch as I ? ”

About the middle of his sickness, he said, —
“ Shall the unspeakable joys of heaven be conferred on me ? Oh ! mighty Saviour ! never, but through thine infinite love and satisfaction ! O never, but by the purchase of thy blood ! ” adding, that — “ with all abhorrence he did reflect upon his former life ; that sincerely, and from his heart, he repented of all that folly and madness which he had committed.”

His faith was strong and cordial in embracing the Christian Religion ; and he justly condemned that — “ foolish and absurd philosophy, which

“the world so much admired, propagated by the
“late Hobbes and others, and which had undone
“him, and many more, of the best parts in the
“nation.”—His confidence rested alone on
Christ for salvation, and therefore appeared to
be of the right kind. He often intreated God,
—‘to strengthen his faith,’—crying out,—“Lord,
“I believe, help mine unbelief.”

He had a growing esteem for the Holy Scriptures, and clearly perceived their divine usefulness and excellency :—“For, having spoken to
“his heart, he acknowledged that all the seeming
“absurdities and contradictions, fancied by men
“of corrupt and reprobate judgments, were vanished; and that their excellency and beauty
“appeared, being come to receive the truth in
“the love of it.”

Satan, the grand adversary of souls, used to assault him with many temptations and evil suggestions, and many things prejudicial to that religious temper of mind with which God had now endued him. One night especially, the Tempter made no little use of his fiery darts, by casting upon him lewd and wicked imaginations: but
—“I thank God,” said he, “I abhor them all,
“and by the power of his grace, which I am

“sure is sufficient for me, I have overcome
“them. ’Tis the malice of the devil, because I
“am rescued from him; and it is the goodness
“of God that frees me from all my spiritual
“enemies.”

There are many proofs of the sincerity of his faith, and the soundness of his repentance; among others we shall single out those that follow.

His hearty concern for the pious education of his children;——“Wishing his son might never
“be a wit, one of those wretched creatures—as
“he explained it—who pride themselves in ridiculing God and religion, denying his being or
“his providence: but that he might become an
“honest man, and of a truly religious character,
“which only could be the support and blessing of
“his family.”

He left a strict charge to the persons in whose custody his papers were,——“to burn all his
“profane and lewd writings, (as being only fit
“to promote vice and immorality, by which he
“had so highly offended, and shamed, and blasphemed, that holy religion into which he had
“been baptized) and all his obscene and filthy
“pictures, which were so notoriously scandalous.”

He solemnly declared, that——“ he would not
“ commit a known sin to gain a kingdom :”——
and sent awful messages to his companions in
iniquity.

He said to a gentleman of character, who came
to see him on his death-bed :——“ O remem-
“ ber that you condemn God no more. He is
“ an avenging God, and will visit you for your
“ sins ; and will, I hope, in mercy, touch your
“ conscience, sooner or later, as he has done
“ mine. You and I have been friends and sin-
“ ners together a great while, and therefore I am
“ the more free with you. We have been all
“ mistaken in our conceits and opinions ; our
“ persuasions have been false and groundless ;
“ therefore God grant you repentance.”

And seeing the gentleman the next day, he
said,——“ Perhaps you were disobliged by my
“ plainness with you yesterday ; I spake the
“ words of truth and soberness.”——And, strik-
ing his hand upon his breast, said,——“ I hope
“ God will touch your heart.”

He laid his commands on the persons who at-
tended him,——“ to spread abroad, and let all
“ men know, if they knew it not already, how
“ God had disciplined him for his sins, by his

“afflicting hand; that his sufferings were most
“just, though he had laid ten thousand times
“more upon him. That he had laid one stripe
“upon another, because of his grievous provoca-
“tions, until he had brought him home to him-
“self. That his former visitations had not had
“that blessed effect he was now sensible of.
“That he had formerly some loose thoughts and
“slight resolutions of reforming, and designed to
“be better; because even the present conse-
“quences of sin were still pestering him, and
“were very troublesome and inconvenient to
“him. But now he had other sentiments of
“things, and acted upon other principles.”

That none whom he had been the instrument of drawing into sin, might lose the benefit of his sincere, though late repentance, he subscribed the following recantation, and ordered it to be published to the world.

“For the benefit of all those whom I may
“have drawn into sin, by my example and en-
“couragement, I leave to the world this my last
“declaration, which I deliver in the presence of
“the GREAT GOD, who knows the secrets of
“all hearts, and before whom I am preparing to
“be judged; that, from the bottom of my soul,

“ I detest and abhor the whole course of my
“ former wicked life; that I think I can never
“ sufficiently admire the goodness of God, who
“ has given me a true sense of my pernicious
“ opinions, and vile practices; by which I have
“ hitherto lived, without hope, and without God
“ in the world; have been an open enemy to
“ Jesus Christ, doing the utmost despite to the
“ holy Spirit of Grace; and that the greatest
“ testimony of my charity to such is, to warn
“ them, in the name of God, and as they regard
“ the welfare of their immortal souls, no more
“ to deny his being or his providence, or despise
“ his goodness; no more to make a mock of sin,
“ or condemn the pure and excellent religion of
“ my ever blessed Redeemer, thro’ whose merits
“ alone, I, one of the greatest of sinners, do yet
“ hope for mercy and forgiveness. Amen.

“ J. ROCHESTER.

“ Delivered and signed in the presence of

“ ANN ROCHESTER.

“ ROBERT PARSONS.”

We shall now attend him to his bed of languishing and death, and view the Power of Religion upon his Mind, in that important season. He

seemed to have no desire to live, but to testify the truth of his repentance, and to bring glory to God.—“If God,” said he, “should spare me yet a little longer time here, I hope to bring glory to his name, proportionably to the dishonour I have done him, in my whole life past; and particularly, by endeavours to convince others, and to assure them of the danger of their condition, if they continue impenitent; and to tell them how graciously God hath dealt with me.”

And when he came within the nearer views of death, about three or four days before it, he said, —“I shall now die. But, O, what unspeakable glories do I feel! What joys, beyond thought or expression, am I sensible of! I am assured of God’s mercy to me, through Jesus Christ. O! how I long to die, and to be with my Saviour!”

GEORGE VILLIERS, Duke of BUCKINGHAM, and a remarkable character and favourite in the reign of Charles the Second, was born at Wal-

lingford House, in the year 1627. "He was," says the Earl of Clarendon, "a man of a noble presence; he had a great liveliness of wit, and a peculiar faculty of turning all things into ridicule. He had no principles of religion, virtue, or friendship. Pleasure, frolic, or extravagant diversion, were all that he laid to heart. He had no steadiness nor conduct; and could never fix his thoughts, nor govern his estate, though, at one time, the greatest in England. He was bred about the King; and, for many years, had a great ascendant over him: but, at length, he drew a lasting disgrace upon himself; and ruined both body and mind, fortune and reputation. The madness of vice appeared in him, in very eminent instances; since, at last, he became contemptible and poor, sickly and sunk in all respects; so that his conversation was as much avoided, as ever it had been courted."

It appears to have been in this deserted and degraded state, mournfully looking over a life spent in vice and folly, that he wrote the following letter to a particular friend, Dr. W——, a short time before his decease.

“ DEAR DOCTOR !

“ I ALWAYS looked upon you to be a person of true virtue, and know you to have a sound understanding: for however I may have acted in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you, I have always had the highest veneration for both. The world and I shake hands; for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. O, what a prodigal have I been of that most valuable of all possessions, Time! I have squandered it away with a profusion unparalleled; and now, when the enjoyment of a few days would be worth the world, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. How despicable, my dear friend, is that man who never prays to his God, but in the time of distress? In what manner can he supplicate that Omnipotent Being in his afflictions, whom, in the time of his prosperity, he never remembered with reverence?

“ Do not brand me with infidelity, when I tell you that I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions at the throne of Grace, or to implore that divine mercy in the next world, which I have scandalously abused in this.

“ Shall ingratitude to man be looked upon as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God? Shall an insult offered to the king be looked upon in the most offensive light, and yet no notice taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect? ”

“ The companions of my former libertinism would scarcely believe their eyes, were you to shew them this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity: but whoever laughs at me for being right, or pities me for being sensible of my errors, is more entitled to my compassion, than resentment. A future state may well enough strike terror into any man, who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God. The apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of his understanding.

“ To what a situation am I now reduced? Is this odious little hut a suitable lodging for a prince? Is this anxiety of mind becoming the character of a Christian? From my rank, I might have expected affluence to wait upon my life;

from religion and understanding, peace to smile upon my end: instead of which I am afflicted with poverty, and haunted with remorse; despised by my country, and, I fear, forsaken by my God!

There is nothing so dangerous as extraordinary abilities. I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications, especially as I sincerely regret that I ever had them. My rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous; and fascinated by the general applause which they procured, I never considered the proper means by which they should be displayed. Hence, to procure a smile from a blockhead, whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of Heaven, to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but contempt.

“Your men of wit generally look upon themselves as discharged from the duties of religion, and confine the doctrines of the gospel to people of meaner understandings. It is a sort of derogation, in their opinion, to comply with the rules of Christianity; and they reckon that man pos-

fessed of a narrow genius, who studies to be good. What a pity that the holy writings are not made the criterion of true judgment! or that any person should pass for a gentleman in this world, but he that appears solicitous about his happiness in the next!

“I am forsaken by all my acquaintance; utterly neglected by the friends of my bosom, and the dependents on my bounty: but no matter! I am not fit to converse with the former, and have no ability to serve the latter. Let me not, however, be wholly cast off by the good. Favour me with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially on a subject I could talk of for ever.

“I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you; my distemper is powerful; come and pray for the departing spirit of the poor unhappy

“BUCKINGHAM!”

Lady RACHEL RUSSELL was born about the year 1636, and was the daughter of the Earl of Southampton.

She appears to have possessed a truly noble mind, a solid understanding, and an amiable and benevolent temper. Her pious resignation, and religious deportment, under the pressure of very deep distress, afford a highly instructive example to others, and an eminent instance of the Power of Religion to sustain the Mind in its greatest trials, and when the waves of affliction may threaten to overwhelm it.

It is well known, that the husband of this lady, William, Lord Russell, was beheaded in the reign of Charles the Second; that he was a man of great merit; and that he sustained the execution of his severe sentence, with Christian and invincible fortitude.

During the period of her illustrious husband's troubles, she conducted herself with a mixture of the most tender affection, and the most surprising magnanimity. She appeared in Court at his trial; and, when the Attorney-General told him,—"He might use the hand of one of his servants in waiting, to take notes of the evidence for his use,"—Lord Russell answered,

that—"he asked none, but that of the Lady that
"fat by him."—The spectators at these words
turning their eyes, and beholding the daughter
of the virtuous Southampton rising up to assist her
Lord in this his utmost distress, a thrill of an-
guish ran through the assembly. After his con-
demnation, she threw herself at the King's feet,
and pleaded, but, alas, in vain, the merits and
loyalty of her father, in order to save her husband.

When the time of their separation came, her
conduct appears to be worthy of the highest ad-
miration; for, without a sigh or tear, she took
her last farewell of him, when it might have been
expected, as they were so happy in each other,—
and no wife could possibly surpass her in affec-
tion,—that the torrent of her distress would have
overflowed its banks, and been too mighty for
restraint.

Lord Russell parted from his Lady with a com-
posed silence; and observing how greatly she
was supported, said, after she was gone;—
"The bitterness of death is now past;"—for
he loved and esteemed her beyond expression.
He declared, that—"she had been a great
"blessing to him; and remarked what a misery
"it would have been to him, if she had not had

“that magnanimity of spirit joined to her tenderness, as never to have desired him to do a base thing for the saving of his life.”—He said—“There was a signal Providence of God, in giving him such a wife, where there were birth, fortune, great understanding, great religion, and great kindness to himself; but her carriage, (said he) in my extremity, was beyond all.”

After this most distressing event, the death of her Lord upon the scaffold; this excellent Lady, encompassed with the darkest clouds of affliction, seemed to be absorbed in a religious concern, to behave herself aright towards God under his mighty hand, and to fulfil the duties now devolved upon herself alone, in the care, education, disposal, and happiness of her children; those living remains of her Lord, which had been so dear to him, and which were, for his sake as well as her own, so dear to herself.

The following short extracts from a few of her letters, will evince the humble and pious frame of her mind, the great benefit she derived from her afflictions, and the comfortable hope she entertained of her future rest and felicity.

———“You, my friend, that knew us both,

and how we lived, must allow I have just cause to bewail my loss. I know it is common with others to lose a friend; but to have lived with such a one, it may be questioned how few can glory in the like happiness, so consequently lament the like loss. Who can but shrink at such a blow, till, by the mighty aid of his holy Spirit, we let the gift of God, which he hath put into our hearts, interpose? O! if I did steadfastly believe I could not be dejected; for I will not injure myself to say I offer my mind any inferior consolation to supply this loss. No; I most willingly forsake this world—this vexatious, troublesome world; in which I have no other business, but to rid my soul from sin, and secure my eternal interests; with patience and courage bear my eminent misfortunes, and ever hereafter be above the smiles and frowns of it: and when I have done the remnant of the work appointed me on earth, then joyfully wait for the heavenly perfection in God's good time, when, by his infinite mercy, I may be accounted worthy to enter into the same place of rest and repose, where he is gone for whom I grieve.

———“The future part of my life will not, I expect, pass as perhaps I would just choose.—

Sense has been long enough satisfied; indeed so long, I know not how to live by faith; yet the pleasant stream that fed it near fourteen years together, being gone, I have no sort of refreshment, but when I can repair to that living fountain from whence all flows; while I look not at the things which are seen, but at those which are not seen, expecting that day which will settle and compose all my tumultuous thoughts, in perpetual peace and quiet.

———"The consideration of the other world is not only a very great, but in my small judgment, the only support under the greatest of afflictions that can befall us here. The enlivening heat of those glories, is sufficient to animate and refresh us, in our dark passage through this world; and though I am below the meanest of God's servants, who have not in the least degree lived answerable to those opportunities I have had; yet my Mediator is my Judge, and he will not despise weak beginnings, though there be more smoke than flame. He will help us in believing; and, though he suffer us to be cast down, will not cast off those who commit their cause to him.—I strive to reflect how large my portion of good things has been; and though

they are passed away, no more to return, yet I have a pleasant work to do, to dress up my soul for my desired change, and fit it for the converse of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect : Among whom, my hope is, my loved Lord is one ; and my often repeated prayer to God is, that if I have a reasonable ground for that hope, it may give a refreshment to my poor soul.

——“ From the enticing delights of the world, I can now be better weaned. I was too rich in possessions, while I possessed him. All relish now is gone ; I bless God for it ; and pray that I may more and more turn the stream of my affections upwards, and set my heart upon the ever-satisfying perfections of God ; not starting at his darkest providences, but remembering continually, that either his glory, justice, or power, is advanced by every one of them, and that mercy is over all his works ; as we shall one day, with ravishing delight, behold. In the meantime, I endeavour to suppress all wild imaginations, which a melancholy fancy is apt to let in, and say, with the man in the Gospel,——“ I believe ; help thou my un-
“ belief.”

———"It is the grace of God which disposes me to ask for, and thirst after, such comforts as the world cannot give. What comforts it can give, I am most sure I have felt, and experienced uncertain and perishing. Such I will never more, Grace assisting, look after; and yet I expect a joyful day after some mournful ones; and though I walk sadly through the valley of death, I will fear no evil; humbling myself under the mighty hand of God, who will save in the day of trouble. He knows my sorrows, and the weakness of my person; I commit myself and mine to him.—The saddest state to a good soul, will one day end in rest. This is my best comfort, and a greater we cannot have; yet the degree is raised, when we consider that we shall not only rest, but live in regions of unspeakable bliss. This should lead us sweetly through the dark passage of the world; and suffer us to start at nothing we either meet with, or our fears suggest may happen to us."

To Lady Essex, she wrote the following letter:——

———"I BESEECH God one day to speak peace to our afflicted minds, and let us not be

disappointed of our great hope. But we must wait for our day of consolation, till this world passes away: an unkind and trustless world this has been to us. Why it has been such, God knows best. All his dispensations serve the end of his providences; and they are ever beautiful, and must be good, and good to every one of us; and even these dismal ones are so to us, if we can bear evidence to our own souls, that we are better for our afflictions; which often God makes them to be to such who suffer wrongfully. We may reasonably believe our friends find that rest we but yet hope for; and what better comfort can your Ladyship or I desire, in this valley of the shadow of death we are walking through? The rougher our path is, the more delightful and ravishing will the great change be to us."

She survived Lord Russell above forty years, and continued his widow to the end of her life. She died in the year 1723, in the 87th year of her age.

Her continued hope and trust in HIM, who had been the staff of her life, and her support in affliction, is evidenced by the following declaration, made not long before the end of her days.

——“ God has not denied me the support of his
“ Holy Spirit, in this my long day of calamity ;
“ but enabled me in some measure, to rejoice in
“ him as my portion for ever ; who has provided
“ a remedy for all our griefs, by his sure pro-
“ mises of another life, where there is no death,
“ nor any pain nor trouble, but fulness of joy,
“ in the presence of God who made us, and loves
“ us for ever.”

MARY, QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN, WIFE OF
KING WILLIAM THE THIRD.

SHE was the daughter of James, Duke of York, afterwards King James the Second, and the Lady Ann Hyde, daughter of the Earl of Clarendon.

She appeared to be happily disposed from very early life, being good and gentle before she was capable of knowing that it was her duty to be so. This temper grew up with her through the whole progress of her childhood. She might need instruction, but she wanted no persuasion. And it is said, that she never once, in the whole

course of her education, gave any occasion to reprove her. Besides a most amiable sweetness of temper, she possessed great understanding, and a mind cultivated with useful learning and knowledge.

She was married in the sixteenth year of her age, and went to reside in Holland with her husband, who was then Prince of Orange; where she conducted herself with so much wisdom and goodness, as to gain universal esteem and affection. But that which was, beyond all comparison, her greatest ornament and possession, was her being of—"a meek and quiet spirit,"—of a truly devout and religious temper; which caused her to look with indifference on the honours and splendour with which she was surrounded; and to seek for her highest enjoyment, in doing good; in peace of mind; and in the hope of a better life.

In proof of her uncommon merit, we may here insert a short declaration concerning her, made by her husband, King William, whom she loved entirely, and who best knew her excellence, and his own great loss in being deprived of her.—When Doctor Tennison, upon her death, went to comfort the King, he answered; that——

“he could not but grieve, since he had lost a
“wife who, in seventeen years, had never been
“guilty of an indiscretion; that, during the
“whole course of their marriage, he had never
“known one single fault in her; and that she
“possessed a worth that nobody thoroughly
“knew but himself.”

In the preceding character of Lady Russell, we have seen the Power and Operation of Religion on the Mind, under some of the darkest clouds of affliction and distress: in the present instance, of Queen Mary, the virtue and preserving nature of the same Divine Principle, when submitted to, is evidenced amidst the magnificence of a court, and the sunshine of worldly prosperity. It is, indeed, a principle of universal agency; adapted to all ranks of men, and to every allotment of Providence; a sure preservative when things are smiling around us, and a sovereign remedy or support under all the calamities of life.

This excellent Queen disposed of a great part of her time, in perusing the Holy Scriptures, and other religious books. By a letter to her father, written in early life, in support of the Protestant faith, she appears to have been thoroughly grounded and established in the prin-

ciples of the Reformation. Bishop Burnet says, that——“ although he had a high opinion of the
“ Princess’s good understanding, before he saw
“ this letter, yet the letter surpris’d him, and
“ gave him an astonishing joy to see so young a
“ person, all on a sudden, without consulting
“ any one, able to write so solid and learned a
“ letter.”

Her talents and abilities were very conspicuous in all her concerns, and particularly in the important charge of Government. Doctor Tillotson, Archbishop of Canterbury, said, that——
“ he was in great admiration at the proofs he
“ knew the Queen gave of her accomplishments,
“ in the weighty affairs of state, in the King’s absence, when the executive part of the Government was in her hands.”

Her compassion and bounty to the poor and afflicted, and those who stood in need of her liberality, were very eminent, and such as corresponded with her exalted station, and the abundant sources of relief to which she had access. She took care to have a just account both of the worthiness, and the necessities, of those who were candidates for her liberality; and, in the conducting of her charity, shewed as great an exact-

ness, attention, and diligence, as if she had had no cares of a higher nature. But what crowned all, was her exact conformity to the rule of the Gospel in her munificence; for none knew to whom, or what she gave, but those whom she was obliged to employ in the communication of her bounty.

The piety of this excellent person, as it was a noble support to her, under some kinds of trouble, so it gave the sharper edge to others. The impieties and blasphemies, the open contempt of religion, and the scorn of virtue, which she heard of from many hands, and from many different parts of the nation, gave her a secret horror, and presented her with such a gloomy prospect, as filled her with melancholy reflections. She was very sensibly touched, when she heard that some, who pretended to much zeal for the Crown and the Revolution, seemed thence to think they had a sort of right to be indulged in their licentiousness, and irregularities. She often said,—
“Can a blessing be expected from such hands, or on any thing that must pass through them?”

She had a just esteem of all persons whom she found truly religious and virtuous; nor could any other considerations weigh much with her,

when these excellencies were not to be found. Next to open impiety, the want of life in those who pretended to religion, and the deadness and disunion of the Protestants in general, very much affected her; and she often said, with poignant regret,—"Can such dry bones live?"

So far was she from entertaining a high opinion of herself, that she had a tender sense of any thing that looked like a miscarriage under her conduct, and was afraid lest some mistake of hers might have occasioned it. And when difficulties grew too great to be surmounted, and she felt an uneasiness in them, she made God her refuge; and often owned, that she found a full calm upon her thoughts, after she had given them a free vent before him in prayer. When melancholy events came from the hand of Providence, she said, that—"though there was no occasion for complaint or anger, upon these cross occurrences, yet there was just cause of grief, since God's hand was to be seen so particularly in them."——Sometimes she feared there might be some secret sins at the root, and blast all; but she would soon correct herself, and say, that—"where so much was

“visible, there was no need of divination concerning that which might be hidden.”

In her brightest seasons, she grew not secure, nor did she withdraw her dependence upon God. In the pleasures of life she maintained a true indifference as to their continuance, and seemed to think of parting with them, in so easy a manner, as plainly shewed how little possession they had of her heart.

At one period, she felt such indisposition of body, as induced her to believe that some great sickness was approaching; but, on this occasion, she felt great quietude and resignation in the prospect of her dissolution, and said, that——
“though she did not pray for death, yet she
“could neither wish nor pray against it. She
“left that to God, and referred herself to the
“disposal of Providence. If she did not wish
“for death, yet she did not fear it.”

As this was the state of her mind, when she viewed that event at some distance, so she maintained the same composure, when in the closest struggle with it. The end of this extraordinary Queen was, indeed, such as might have been presumed, from the pure and exemplary life she had lived. When she was first informed of the

danger to be apprehended from her disorder, (which was the small-pox) she replied ;——“ I
“ have been instructed how very hazardous a
“ thing it is to rely upon a death-bed repent-
“ ance ; and I am not now to begin the great
“ work of preparing for death ; and, I praise
“ God, I am not afraid of it.”——Under the
weight of her disorder, which was very trying to
nature, she appeared to feel no inward depre-
ssion or discouragement of mind ; a willingness
to die, and an entire resignation to the will of
God, accompanied her to the closing scene ; in
the near approach of which she declared, that——
“ she experienced the joys of a good conscience,
“ and the Power of Religion giving her sup-
“ ports, which even the last agonies could not
“ shake.”

Thus died this most excellent Princess ; and,
no doubt passed from an earthly to a heavenly
crown,—“ a crown of glory that shall never fade
away.”

The contemplation of such peaceful and happy
conclusions of life, is sufficient, at times, to ele-
vate the soul, and to make all the glories and
enjoyments of this world sink into nothing.—

Ah !—these are favoured, precious moments,

when the Divine Power of Religion breaks in upon us, dissolves the enchantment of the world, dissipates the mist of vain doubts and speculation, and raises a fervent aspiration, that whatever may be our allotment through life, the death of the righteous may be ours, and the love of God our portion for ever!

GILBERT BURNET, Bishop of Salisbury, a distinguished character, and in great favour with William and Mary and Queen Anne, was a prelate remarkable for his usefulness, moderation, and liberality of mind. The following sentiments solemnly expressed by him, towards the conclusion of his days, are so expressive of the Nature and Power of true Religion, and of its influence upon his own Mind, that they justly claim a place in these memorials.

———"I WILL conclude with that which is the most important of all things, and which alone will carry every thing else along with it; which is to recommend, in the most solemn and serious manner, the study and practice of religion to all sorts of men, as that which is both the light of the world, and salt of the earth.

“Nothing does so open our faculties, and compose and direct the whole man, as an inward sense of God; of his authority over us; of the laws he hath set us; of his eye ever upon us; of his hearing our prayers; assisting our endeavours; watching over our concerns; of his being to judge, and reward or punish us in another state, according to what we do in this. Nothing will give a man such a detestation of sin, and such a sense of the goodness of God, and of our obligations to holiness, as a right understanding and firm belief of the Christian Religion. Nothing can give a man so calm a peace within, and such a firm security against all fears and dangers without, as the belief of a kind, wise Providence, and of a future state.

“Integrity of heart gives a man courage and confidence that cannot be shaken. A man is sure, that by living according to the rules of religion, he becomes the wisest, the best, and the happiest creature that he is capable of being. Honest industry, the employing of time well, a constant sobriety, an undefiled purity and chastity, with a quiet serenity, are the best preservatives too of life and health: so that take a man as an individual, religion is his guard, his perfec-

tion, his beauty, and his glory. This will make him a light in the world, shining brightly, and enlightening many round about him.

“ Thus, religion, if truly received and sincerely adhered to, would prove the greatest of all blessings to a nation. But, by religion, I understand something more than the receiving of some doctrines, though ever so true, or the professing of them, and engaging to support them, not without zeal and eagerness. What signify the best doctrines, if men do not live suitably to them; if they have not a due influence upon their thoughts and their lives? Men of bad lives, with sound opinions, are self-condemned, and lie under a highly aggravated guilt.

“ By religion, I do not mean an outward compliance with forms and customs, in going to church, to prayers, to sermons, and to sacraments, with an external shew of devotion; or, which is more, with some inward forced good thoughts, in which many satisfy themselves, while these have no visible effect on their lives, nor any inward force to subdue and rectify their appetites, passions, and secret designs. Those customary performances, how good and useful soever when understood and rightly directed, are of

little value when men rest on them, and think, because they do them, they have acquitted themselves of their duty, though they continue still proud, covetous, full of deceit, envy, and malice. Even secret prayers, the most effectual means, are designed for a higher end; which is, to possess our minds with such a constant and present sense of divine truths, as may make these live in us, and govern us, and draw down such assistance, as to exalt and sanctify our natures.

“So that, by religion, I mean such a sense of divine truth as enters into a man, and becomes the spring of a new nature within him; reforming his thoughts and designs; purifying his heart; sanctifying and governing his whole deportment, his words as well as his actions; convincing him that it is not enough not to be scandalously vicious, or to be innocent in his conversation, but that he must be entirely, uniformly, and constantly, pure and virtuous, animated with zeal to be still better and better, more eminently good and exemplary.

“This is true religion, which is the perfection of human nature, and the joy and delight of every one that feels it active and strong within him. It is true, this is not arrived at all at once,

and it will have an unhappy alloy, hanging long even about a good man; but, as those ill mixtures are the perpetual grief of his soul, so that it is his chief care to watch over, and to mortify them, he will be in a continual progress, still gaining ground upon himself; and as he attains to a degree of purity, he will find a noble flame of life and joy growing up in him. Of this I write with a greater concern and emotion, because I have felt this the true, and, indeed, the only joy which runs through a man's heart and life. It is that which hath been, for many years, my greatest support. I rejoice daily in it. I feel from it the earnest of that supreme joy which I want and long for; and I am sure there is nothing else which can afford any true and complete happiness."

THERE are few greater instances of the comfortable Power of Religion on the Mind, in the time of need, than that which was exhibited by an excellent and pious gentlewoman of the name of HOUSMAN, when she drew near the close of life.

She was born at Kidderminster, of religious parents, who early instructed her in the duties of religion.

By her diary, it appears she was brought under lively impressions of divine things, at thirteen years of age. From 1711, when her diary begins, to 1735, the time of her death, her life appears to have been a walk in the fear of God.

The following account of her last illness and death, was drawn up by a person that attended her throughout.

From the time of her first seizure, she was exercised with very violent pains, without any intermission till her death; such as, she would often say, she thought she could not have borne:—
“But,” said she, “God is good; verily he is
“good to me! I have found him a good and
“gracious God to me all my days.”

Again, when recovering out of extreme pain;
—“God is good; I have found him so; and
“though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.
“These pains make me love my Lord Jesus the
“better. O they put me in mind what he suffered for me, to purchase salvation for my poor
“soul! Why me, Lord! why me, the greatest
“of sinners? Why me, that stood it out so long

“ against the rich offers of thy grace, and the
“ kind invitations of the Gospel? How many
“ helps and means have I enjoyed more than
“ many others; yea, above the most!—I had a
“ religious father and mother; and I had access
“ to a valuable minister, to whom I could often
“ and freely open my mind. I have lived in a
“ golden age. I have lived in peaceable times,
“ wherein I have enjoyed great advantages and
“ helps for communion with God, and the peace
“ of my own mind; for which I owe my gra-
“ cious God and Father more praises than words
“ can express. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all
“ that is within me bless his holy name! Bless
“ the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all, or
“ any of his benefits!”

She often said, that she could not find words to express the goodness of God to her, it had been so great and manifold——“ O let all know I
“ am not afraid of death; but the pains of dying
“ may be terrible! I know not yet what they
“ will be.”

When any were weeping and mourning over her, she would say;——“ Weep not for me: it
“ is the will of God; therefore be content. If it
“ may be for his honour and glory, he will spare

“me a little longer; if not, I am wholly resigned
“to the will of God. I am content to stay here,
“as long as he has doing or suffering work for
“me; and I am willing to go, if it be my Fa-
“ther’s good pleasure. Therefore be content,
“and say,—It is the Lord, let him do what
“seemeth him good.”

To a gentlewoman that came to see her, she
said;—“Cousin, I think I shall die: and now,
“what a comfort it is that I am not afraid of
“death! The blood of Christ cleanseth me from
“all sin. But mistake me not; there must be a
“life and conversation agreeable to the Gospel,
“or else our faith in Christ is a dead faith. Se-
“cure Christ for your friend; set not your heart
“on things below: riches and honours, and what
“the world calls pleasures, are all fading, pe-
“rishing things.”

She then threw out her hand, and said,—
“O if I had thousands and ten thousands of gold
“and silver lying by me, what could they do for
“me, now I am dying? Therefore take the ad-
“vice of a dying friend that wishes you well.
“Do not set your affections on riches, or any
“thing here below. Remember, death will
“come, whether you are ready or unready, wil-

“ling or unwilling, in a little while. I com-
“mend you to God. I wish you well; and
“hope, in a short time, we shall meet again in
“heaven, that place of perfect happiness, rest,
“and joy.”

Throughout the whole time of her sickness, she was in a cheerful, thankful frame. When she was cold, and had something warm given her, she would say,—“Blessed be God for all
“his mercies; and blessed be God for this com-
“fort in my passage through this wilderness
“world.”

When the above-mentioned person that attended her, warmed a piece of flannel, and put it round her cold hands, she thanked her for it, and said,—“O how many mercies I have! I
“want for nothing. Here is every thing I can
“wish for. I can say, I never wanted any good
“thing. I want nothing but an easy passage to
“glory. It was free Grace that plucked me from
“the very brink of hell; and it is the power of
“divine Grace that has supported me through
“the whole of my life. Hitherto I can say the
“Lord is gracious. He hath been very merci-
“ful to me, in supporting me under all my trials.
“The Lord brings affliction, but it is not be-

“cause he delights to afflict his children: it is
 “at all times for our profit. I can say, it hath
 “been good for me to be afflicted; it hath en-
 “abled me to discern things, which, when I was
 “in health, I could not: it hath made me see
 “more of the vanity and emptiness of this world,
 “and all its creature-comforts; for at best they
 “are but vanity. Vanity and vexation of spirit
 “may be justly written upon them all. I can
 “say, from my own experience, I have found
 “them to be so many a time.”

To her husband, the day before she died, she
 said,—“My dear, I think I am going apace; and
 “I hope you will be satisfied, because it is the
 “will of God. You have at all times been very
 “suitable, very loving and good to me; and I
 “thank you for it kindly: and now I desire you
 “freely to resign and give me up to God. If
 “God see it best to prolong my stay here upon
 “earth, I am willing to stay; or if he see it best
 “to take me to himself, I am willing to go. I
 “am willing to be and bear what may be most
 “for God’s glory.”

The evening before she died, she found death
 stealing upon her, and feeling her own pulse,
 said,—“Well, it will be but a little while be-

“fore my work will be done in this world.
“Then I shall have done with prayer. My
“whole employment then, will be praise and
“love. Here, I love God but faintly, yet, I
“hope, sincerely; but there, it will be perfectly.
“I shall behold his face in righteousness; for I
“am thy servant, Lord! bought with blood,
“with precious blood. Christ died to purchase
“the life of my soul. A little while, and then
“I shall be singing that sweet song,—Blessing,
“and honour, and glory, and power, be unto
“HIM that sitteth upon the throne, and to the
“LAMB for ever and ever.”

With smiles in her face, and transports of joy, she would often say,—“Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Why are thy chariot wheels so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of thy chariot? O blessed convoy! come and fetch my soul to dwell with God, and Christ, and perfect spirits for ever and ever. When I get to that blessed society above, my pleasures will never end. O the glory, the glory that shall be set on the head of faith and love!”

A few minutes before her departure, finding herself going, she desired to be lifted up, which was done, and then she cheerfully said,——

“Farewel, sin ! farewel, pains !”—and so finished her course with joy.

THE HONOURABLE ROBERT BOYLE, that most exact searcher into the works of Nature, and who saw Atheism and Infidelity beginning to shew themselves in the loose and voluptuous reign of King Charles the Second, pursued his philosophical inquiries with religious views, to establish the minds of men in a firm belief, and thorough sense of the infinite power and wisdom of the great Creator.

This eminent philosopher, and truly good man, was the son of Richard, the first Earl of Cork in Ireland ; and was born in the year 1627. He was not more distinguished by the nobility of his birth and family, than by his talents and great attainments in learning and knowledge.

He was strongly solicited by Lord Clarendon to enter into ecclesiastical orders ; which, however, for several reasons, he thought it his duty to decline. Bishop Burnet, to whom he communicated memorandums concerning his life,

tells us, that what had the greatest weight in determining his judgment on this subject, was,—

“ The not feeling within himself any motion or
“ tendency of mind, which he could safely
“ esteem a call from the Holy Spirit; and so not
“ venturing to take holy orders, lest he should be
“ found to have lied unto it.”

The Bishop, who was intimately acquainted with him, observes, that,—“ it appeared from
“ those who conversed with him on his inquiries
“ into Nature, that his main design in that (on
“ which as he had his own eye constantly, so he
“ took care to put others often in mind of it) was
“ to raise in himself and others, vaster thoughts
“ of the greatness and glory, and of the wisdom
“ and goodness of God.”—This was so deep in his thoughts, that he concludes the article of his will, which relates to the Royal Society, in these words:—“ Wishing them a happy success in
“ their attempts to discover the true nature of
“ the works of God; and praying that they and
“ all other searchers into physical truths, may
“ cordially refer their attainments, to the glory
“ of the great Author of Nature, and to the comfort of mankind.”

In another place, the same person speaks of him

thus:—"He had the profoundest veneration
"for the great God of heaven and earth, that I
"ever observed in any man. The very name of
"God was never mentioned by him without a
"pause and visible stop in his discourse."

The veneration he had for the Holy Scriptures appears, not only from his studying them with great attention, and exhorting others to do the same; but more particularly, from a distinct treatise which he wrote on purpose to defend the Scripture style, and to answer all the objections which profane and irreligious persons have made against it. And his zeal in propagating Christianity in the world, appears by many and large benefactions to that end.

Such were the strictness and exemplariness of this great and good man's life, through the whole course of it, that Bishop Burnet says;—
"I might challenge the whole tribe of libertines,
"to come and view the usefulness as well as the
"excellency of the Christian religion, in a life
"that was entirely dedicated to it."

JOHN LOCKE, a very celebrated philosopher, and one of the greatest men that England ever produced, was born in the year 1632. His sound judgment and accurate talent in reasoning, are highly commended, even by the Sceptics and Infidels of our times.

This enlightened man shewed his zeal for the Christian Religion, first, in his middle age, by publishing a discourse on purpose to demonstrate the reasonableness of believing Jesus to be the promised Messiah; and, after that, in the latter years of his life, by a very judicious Commentary upon several of the Epistles of the Apostle Paul.

The Scriptures are every where mentioned by him with the greatest reverence; and he exhorts Christians,—"to betake themselves in earnest
"to the study of the way to salvation, in those
"holy writings, wherein God has revealed it
"from heaven, and proposed it to the world;
"seeking our religion where we are sure it is in
"truth to be found, comparing spiritual things
"with spiritual."

In a letter, written the year before his death, to one who asked this question,—"What is the
"shortest and surest way for a young man to at-

“tain to the true knowledge of the Christian
“Religion?”—His answer is;—“Let him study
“the Holy Scriptures, especially the New Testa-
“ment: therein are contained the words of
“eternal life. It has God for its author; fal-
“sation for its end; and truth, without any
“mixture of error, for its matter.”—A direction
that was copied from his own practice in the
latter part of his life, when for—“fourteen or
“fifteen years, he applied himself in an espe-
“cial manner to the study of the Scriptures,
“and employed the last years of his life hardly
“in any thing else. He was never weary of
“admiring the great views of that sacred book,
“and the just relation of all its parts: he every
“day made discoveries in it that gave him fresh
“cause of admiration.”

The consolation which he derived from Divine
Revelation, is forcibly expressed in these words:
——“I gratefully receive and rejoice in the light
“of Revelation, which hath set me at rest in
“many things, the manner whereof my poor
“reason can by no means make out to me.

After he had diligently employed a great part
of his life in a variety of occupations, he chose
a pleasing retirement for the remainder of his

days. This leisure appears to have been productive of solid improvement; and, on the retrospect of life, to have afforded a deep conviction of the vanity attendant on the love and too earnest pursuit of the world, and of its insufficiency, at best, to confer true and lasting happiness.

The summer before his death, he began to be very sensible of his approaching dissolution. He often spoke of it, and always with great composure. A short time before his decease, he declared to a friend, that——“he was in the sentiments of perfect charity towards all men; “and of a sincere union with the Church of “Christ, under whatever name distinguished.

The day before his death, Lady Masham being alone with him, and sitting by his bed-side, he exhorted her to regard this world only as a state of preparation for a better; adding, that——“he had lived long enough, and thanked God “for having passed his life so comfortably; but “that this life appeared to him mere vanity.”

The same day, he particularly advised all about him to read the Scriptures; and desired to be remembered by them at evening prayers. Being told that, if he chose it, the whole family should

be with him in his chamber, he said he should be very glad to have it so, if it would not give too much trouble: and an occasion offering to speak of the goodness of God, he especially exalted the care which God shewed to man in justifying him by faith in Jesus Christ; and returned God thanks, in particular, for having blessed him with the knowledge of that Divine Saviour.

About two months before his death, he drew up a letter to his friend, Anthony Collins, and left this direction upon it:—"To be delivered
"to him after my decease."

THE FOLLOWING IS A COPY OF IT.

"I know you loved me living, and will preserve my memory when I am dead. All the use to be made of it is, that this life is a scene of vanity, which soon passes away, and affords no solid satisfaction, but in the consciousness of doing well, and in the hopes of another life. This is what I can say upon experience, and what you will find to be true, when you come to make up the account.

"Adieu! I leave my best wishes with you.

"JOHN LOCKE."

JOSEPH ADDISON, Esq. one of the Principal Secretaries of State in the reign of King George the First, but who derived less dignity from his public office and situation in life, than from his private character and religious writings, was born in 1672, at Ambresbury in Wiltshire.

He has given abundant proof of his belief of Christianity, and his zeal against unbelievers, in his—"Evidences of the Christian Religion."—His writings on religious subjects, discover a pious and solid frame of mind; and his general conduct in life, gives us a convincing proof, that what he wrote was the genuine feelings of his heart.

The following lines of his, are sweetly expressive of the peace and pleasure which he derived from the sure hope of another and a better life:—"The prospect of a future state is the
"secret comfort and refreshment of my soul.
"It is that which makes nature look cheerful
"about me; it doubles all my pleasures, and
"supports me under all my afflictions. I can
"look at disappointments and misfortunes, pain
"and sickness, death itself, with indifference, so
"long as I keep in view the pleasures of eternity,
"and the state of being in which there

“ will be no fears nor apprehensions, pains nor
“ sorrows.”

But his virtue shone out brightest at the point of death; for after a long and manly, but vain struggle with his distempers, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life; but with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living, but sent for a youth nearly related, and finely accomplished, yet not above being the better for good impressions from a dying friend. He came; but life now glimmering in the socket, the dying friend was silent. After a decent and proper pause, the youth said, —“ Dear Sir! you sent for me: I believe, and
“ hope, you have some commands: I shall hold
“ them most dear.” — May the reader not only feel the reply, but retain its impression! Forcibly grasping the youth’s hand, he softly said, —
“ See in what peace a Christian can die!” — He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired.

Through Divine Grace, how great is man!
Through Divine Mercy, how stingsless death!

SIR ISAAC NEWTON is universally acknowledged to have been the most profound philosopher that this, or perhaps any other nation has produced: the vastness of his mental powers has excited the admiration of the greatest men in Europe.

He was born in Lincolnshire, in the year 1642; and, besides his great philosophical character, he was remarkable for being of a very meek disposition, and a great lover of peace. He would rather have chosen to remain in obscurity, than to have the calm of life ruffled by those storms and disputes, which genius and learning often draw upon those who are eminent for them. We find him reflecting on the controversy respecting his optic lectures, (into which he was almost unavoidably engaged) in the following terms:—"I blamed my own imprudence, for parting with so real a blessing as my quiet, to run after a shadow."

This excellent person is well known to have been a firm believer, and a serious Christian. His discoveries concerning the frame and system of the universe, were applied by him to demonstrate the being of a God, and to illustrate his power and wisdom in the creation.

He applied himself also, with great attention, to the study of the Holy Scriptures, and considered the several parts of them with uncommon exactness; particularly as to the order of time, and the series of prophecies and events relating to the Messiah. Upon this head, he has left behind him an excellent discourse, to prove that the famous prophecy of Daniel's weeks, was an express prediction of the coming of the Messiah, and that it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

The testimony of the pious and learned Dr. Doddridge to the most interesting part of this great man's character, cannot be omitted on this occasion.—“According to the best information,” says he, “whether public or private, I could ever obtain, his firm faith in the Divine Revelation discovered itself in the most genuine fruits of substantial virtue and piety; and consequently gives us the justest reason to conclude, that he is now rejoicing in the happy effects of it, infinitely more than in all the applause which his philosophical works have procured him, though they have commanded a fame lasting as the world.”

The disorder of which he died, was supposed to be the stone in the bladder; which was, at

times, attended with such severe paroxysms, as forced out large drops of sweat that ran down his face. In these trying circumstances, he was never observed to utter the least complaint, nor to express the least impatience.

He departed this life in the eighty-fifth year of his age; and, in his principles, and conduct through life, has left a strong and comfortable evidence, that the highest intellectual powers harmonize with religion and virtue; and that there is nothing in Christianity but what will abide the scrutiny of the soundest and most enlarged understanding.

How great and satisfactory a confirmation is it to the sincere, humble Christian, and what an insurmountable barrier does it present to the Infidel mind, to perceive, in the list of Christian believers, the exalted and venerable names of Bacon, Newton, Boyle, Locke, Addison, and Lyttleton! men who must be acknowledged to be ornaments of human nature, when we consider the wide compass of their abilities, the great extent of their learning and knowledge, and the piety, integrity, and beneficence of their lives. These eminent characters firmly adhered to the belief of Christianity, after the most diligent and exact re-

searches into the life of its Founder, the authenticity of its records, the completion of the prophecies, the sublimity of its doctrines, the purity of its precepts, and the arguments of its adversaries.

LADY HASTINGS.

A LIVELY instance of the Power and Support of Religion, we have in the life, sufferings, and death, of the Lady Elizabeth Hastings.

An ingenuous temper, a quickness of understanding, a benevolent spirit, a flexibility of nature, and a solemn sense of divine things, were observable in her tender age; and, in the dangerous ascent of life, her feet were guided and preserved in the paths of rectitude and goodness; so that she was not only free from the stain of vice in her rising years, but superior to the world, and its vain and trifling amusements. Through the whole course of her time, her lamp shone brightly; and, in mature age, diffused its light and influence in a wide extent around her.

It appears that the great aim of her life was to promote the glory of God, and the welfare of

men ; keeping her capacities, talents, and extensive fortune, continually upon the stretch, for the benefit of her fellow-creatures. Of all her cares, a most especial one was that of the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, the needy, and him that hath no helper ; the lame, the halt, and the blind. These objects drew out the compassions of her soul. She participated in their sufferings ; and would often converse with them, and inquire into their history, with great condescension. She studied their particular cases, and put them in the way of a better condition. She often visited them in sickness, bore the expences of it ; and, no doubt, endeavoured to cheer and encourage them under all the apparent hardships of their allotment.

The evening of her day was distinguished by great bodily affliction, having a cancer in the breast, for which she underwent an amputation. But in all her sufferings from this cause, and even under the trying operation, her religious fortitude and serenity of mind did not forsake her. The resignation of her spirit to the dispensations of Divine Providence, is strongly marked by the following expressions, which dropped from her during the course of this painful distemper ;

——“I would not wish to be out of my present situation for all the world; nor exchange it for “any other, at any price.”

The night subsequent to the operation, was not a season of much sleep, but it was a night of celestial peace; a time of thanksgiving to her God, for the visible demonstration of his power in and about her; for his stretched out arm in her great deliverance; for the bountiful provisions he had made for all the occasions of her soul and body; and, in a word, for all his blessings conferred upon her.

She was, sooner than expected, restored to a comfortable state of health, and to that life of charity and beneficence, which was the joy of her heart: but the disorder—repressed only for a time—appeared again with new malignity, and, at length, put a period to all the sorrows of mortality. Her lamp and her life were, however, to be extinguished together, and she occupied till her Lord came.

A short season before her departure, animated with impressions of Divine Goodness, she broke out, with a raised accent, in the following manner:——“Lord! what is it that I see?—O the “greatness of the glory that is revealed in me!—

“that is before me!”—so abundant appears to have been her entrance into the everlasting kingdom of her Lord and Saviour.

The truly religious, whose evidences for heaven are clear, rational, and well founded, have at times, in their travel through life, a tide of hope and joy springing up in their minds, beyond expression; a felicity more moving and satisfactory than any can imagine, but they who have, in some degree, experienced it. And when they are just entering upon the promised land, they are sometimes favoured to have the splendour of the eternal day dawn upon them, and to shine as through the breaches of their shattered bodies; raising in their spirits such an earnest of happiness, such foretastes of joy, as enable them to pass through the valley of death in peace and triumph.

What a rich reward for all the crosses and conflicts of this probationary scene! and how animating a source of encouragement, during our pilgrimage, to rise above, and look beyond, all the troubles of time!

COL. JAMES GARDINER, a person of distinguished character, was for many years of his life greatly addicted to sensual pleasures. With a strong constitution of body, great flow of animal spirits, fine personal accomplishments, and a large circle of gay and dissipated companions, he seemed as amply qualified as most men, to range in the field of animal enjoyments, and to extract from it all that it is capable of yielding. Yet this complete sensualist, in the meridian of his joys, bitterly experienced, that——“even in laughter
“the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that
“mirth is heaviness.”

Being at one time congratulated by some of his dissolute companions, on his distinguished felicity, and a dog happening at that time to come into the room, he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself,——“Oh!
“that I were that dog!”——Such was then his happiness; and such, perhaps, is that of hundreds more, who bear themselves highest in the contempt of religion, and glory in that miserable servitude which they affect to call liberty.

His continual neglect of the great Author of his being, of whose perfections he could not doubt, and to whom he knew himself to be un-

der daily and perpetual obligations, gave him, in some moments of involuntary reflection, inexpressible remorse; and this, at times, wrought upon him to such a degree, that he resolved he would attempt to pay him some acknowledgments. Accordingly, for a time, he did it; repeating, in retirement, some passages out of the Psalms, and perhaps other Scriptures, which he still retained in his memory; and owning, in a few strong words, the many mercies and deliverances he had received, and the ill returns he had made for them. But these strains were too devout to continue long in a heart as yet quite un sanctified; for how readily soever he could repeat acknowledgments of the Divine power, presence, and goodness, and own his follies and faults, he was stopt short by the remonstrances of his conscience, as to the flagrant absurdity of confessing sins he did not desire to forsake, and of pretending to praise God for his mercies, when he did not endeavour to live in his service, and to behave in such a manner as gratitude, if sincere, would plainly dictate.

At length it pleased the Author of all good, so to visit his soul, that, heartily joining therewith, he became a sincere penitent, and continued the

remainder of his days, a bright and steady example of virtue and goodness. His gratitude to God for his singular deliverance, his continued sense of the friendship of so gracious a Being, and his unshaken hope of eternal happiness, filled his heart with unutterable peace and joy; and caused abundant compassion for those unhappy persons who prefer the transient amusements of a day, to the highest of all enjoyments, the perpetual love and favour of an Almighty Friend. Many of his letters, and particularly the following ones to his wife, and to an intimate acquaintance, testify his favoured state of mind, and how great was his enjoyment in communion with the Father of Spirits.

“I bless God, I was never better in my life;
“and I wish I could be so happy as to hear the
“same of you; or rather (in other words) to
“hear that you had obtained an entire trust in
“God. That would infallibly keep you in perfect
“peace; for the God of Truth hath promised it. Oh! how ought we to be longing
“to be with Christ; which is infinitely better
“than any thing we can propose here! To be
“there, where all complaints shall be for ever
“banished; where no mountains shall separate

“between God and our souls. And I hope it
“will be some addition to our happiness, that
“you and I shall be separated no more; but
“that, as we have joined in singing the praises of
“our glorious Redeemer here, we shall sing
“them in a much higher strain through an end-
“less eternity.”

Speaking of one of his children, who, he had heard, made a commendable progress in learning, he expressed his satisfaction in it, and added; —“But how much greater joy would it give
“me, to hear that he was greatly advanced in
“the school of Christ! Oh! that our children
“may be wise to salvation; and may grow in
“grace as they do in stature!”

On another occasion he writes thus:—“What
“would I have given this day, upon the road,
“for paper, pen, and ink, when the Spirit of the
“Most High rested upon me! Oh! for the pen
“of a ready writer, and the tongue of an angel,
“to declare what God hath done this day for
“my soul! But, in short, it is in vain to attempt
“it: all that I am able to say, is only this, that
“my soul has been for some hours joining with
“the blessed spirits above, in giving glory, and
“honour, and praise, unto him that sitteth upon

“the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and
“ever.”

Such were the elevations of his mind: yet there are many who will be inclined to censure them, as the flights of enthusiasm.—But when we consider the scriptural phrases,—“of walking with God; of having communion with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ; of Christ’s coming to them that open the door of their hearts to him, and supping with them; of God’s shedding abroad his love in the heart by his Spirit; of his coming with Jesus Christ, and making his abode with any one that loves him; of making us glad by the light of his countenance,”—and a variety of other equivalent expressions, we shall see reason to judge very favourably of the sentiments contained in these letters.

If habitual love to God; firm faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; a steady dependence on the divine promises; a full persuasion of the wisdom and goodness of all the dispensations of Providence; a high esteem for the blessings of the heavenly world; and a sincere contempt for the vanities of this, can properly be called enthusiasm, then was Colonel Gardiner indeed one of the greatest

enthusiasts our age has produced; and in proportion to the degree in which he was so, he must be esteemed one of the wisest and happiest of mankind.

“How often,” says the pious Grove, “are
“good thoughts suggested, heavenly affections
“kindled and inflamed! How often is the
“Christian prompted to holy actions, drawn to
“his duty, restored, quickened persuaded, in
“such a manner, that he would be unjust to the
“Spirit of God, to question his agency in the
“whole! Yes, O my soul! there is a Supreme
“Being, who governs the world, and is present
“with it; who takes up his more special habita-
“tion in good men, and is nigh to all who call
“upon him, to sanctify and assist them! Hast
“thou not felt him, O my soul! like another
“soul, actuating thy faculties, exalting thy
“views, purifying thy passions, exciting thy
“graces, and begetting in thee an abhorrence of
“sin, and a love of holiness? And is not all this
“an argument of his presence, as truly as if thou
“didst see him?”

A LETTER FROM J. HERVEY, WHEN ON A BED
OF SICKNESS, TO A FRIEND.

“My health is continually upon the decline, and the springs of life are all relaxing. My age is removed, and departed from me as a shepherd’s tent. Medicine is baffled; and my physician, Dr. Stonehouse, who is a dear friend to his patient, and a lover of the Lord Jesus, pities, but cannot succour me.

“Now I apprehend myself near the close of life, and stand, as it were, on the brink of the grave, with eternity full in my view, perhaps my dear friend would be willing to know my sentiments in this awful situation: at such a juncture the mind is most unprejudiced, and the judgment not so liable to be dazzled by the glitter of worldly objects.

“I have been too fond of reading every thing valuable and elegant that has been penned in our language, and been peculiarly charmed with the historians, orators, and poets of antiquity; but were I to renew my studies, I would take leave of those accomplished trifles; I would resign the delights of modern wits, amusement, and eloquence, and devote my attention to the Scrip-

tures of truth. I would sit with much greater assiduity at my Divine Master's feet, and desire to know nothing in comparison of Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

DR. ISAAC WATTS affords such an eminent example of the supporting and animating Power of Religion, under the pressure of great bodily affliction, that we trust the insertion of it will be acceptable to the reader.

We shall pass over the active period of his life, (in which he was distinguished by eminent piety and goodness, and an indefatigable labour for the welfare of his fellow-creatures) and attend him, when labouring under the distresses of a feeble frame, and a long-continued indisposition.

Of those seasons of affliction, he says, with a truly elevated mind and thankful heart,——

"I am not afraid to let the world know, that
"amidst the sinkings of life and nature, Christi-
"anity and the Gospel were my support ! Amidst
"all the violence of my distemper, and the tire-
"some months of it, I thank God I never lost
"sight of reason or religion, though sometimes

“ I had much ado to preserve the machine of
“ animal nature in such order, as regularly to ex-
“ ercise either the Man or the Christian.”

The divine peace of conscience he enjoyed under these trying circumstances; and the rational and Christian foundation of his hope and trust in the Divine Goodness, together with his humble appeal to God on these solemn occasions, are beautifully and justly expressed in his own devout soliloquy.

“ Yet, gracious God ! amid these storms of nature,
“ Thine eyes behold a sweet and sacred calm
“ Reign through the realms of conscience : all within
“ Lies peaceful, all composed. ’Tis wond’rous Grace
“ Keeps off thy terrors from this humble bosom ;
“ Though stained with sins and follies, yet serene
“ In penitential peace and cheerful hope,
“ Sprinkled and guarded with atoning blood.
“ Thy vital smiles, amidst this desolation,
“ Like heav’nly sun-beams, hid behind the clouds,
“ Break out in happy moments, with bright radiance
“ Cleaving the gloom ; the fair celestial light
“ Softens and gilds the horrors of the storm,
“ And richest cordials to the heart conveys.
“ O glorious solace of immense distress,
“ A Conscience and a God ! This is my rock
“ Of firm support, my shield of sure defence

" Against infernal arrows. Rise, my soul!
" Put on thy courage : here's the living spring
" Of joys divinely sweet and ever new,
" A peaceful conscience, and a smiling heav'n.
" My God, permit a creeping worm to say,
" Thy Spirit knows I love thee ! Worthless wretch,
" To dare to love a God !—But Grace requires,
" And Grace accepts. Thou seest my lab'ring soul.
" Weak as my zeal is, yet my zeal is true ;
" It bears the trying furnace. Love divine
" Constrains me : I am thine. Incarnate Love
" Has seiz'd, and holds me in almighty arms !
" Here's my salvation, my eternal hope,
" Amidst the wreck of worlds and dying nature,
" I am the Lord's, and he for ever mine !"

The Power of Religion was very eminently seen in him, at these important seasons of languid and painful life. And after his recovery, what excellent effects does it still produce ! How was his heart enlarged with love to God ! and in what pathetic language does he pour out his Spirit !

" Almighty Pow'r, I love thee ! blissful name,
" My healer God ! and may my inmost heart
" Love and adore for ever ! O 'Tis good
" To wait submissive at thy holy throne,

“ To leave petitions at thy feet, and bear
“ Thy frowns and silence with a patient soul.
“ The hand of Mercy is not short to save,
“ Nor is the ear of heavenly Pity deaf
“ To mortal cries. IT notic'd all my groans,
“ And sighs, and long complaints, with wise delay,
“ Tho' painful to the sufferer, and thy hand
“ In proper moment brought desired relief.”

And now, how amiable does he appear, when the shadows of the evening were stretching over him ! In his last sickness, the active and sprightly powers of his nature failed him, that is, they were gradually doing so for two or three years before his decease ; yet his trust in God, through Jesus the Mediator, remained unshaken to the last. He was heard to say,—“ I bless God I
“ I can lie down with comfort at night, not being
“ solicitous whether I awake in this world or
“ another.”—And again, “ I should be glad to
“ read more, yet not in order to be more con-
“ firmed in the truth of the Christian religion, or
“ in the truth of its promises ; for I believe them
“ enough, to venture an eternity upon them.”

When he was almost worn out, and broken down by his infirmities, he observed, in con-

versation with a friend, that——“ he remembered an aged minister used to say,—“ that the most learned and knowing Christians, “ when they come to die, have only the same “ plain promises of the Gospel for their support, as the common and unlearned: and “ so,”—said he—“ I find it. It is the plain “ promises of the Gospel that are my support; “ and, I bless God, they are plain promises, that “ do not require much labour and pains to understand them.”

At times, when he found his spirit tending to impatience, and ready to complain that he could only lead a mere animal life, he would check himself thus:——“ The business of a Christian “ is to bear the will of God, as well as to do “ it. If I were in health, I could be doing “ that, and that I may do now. The best “ thing in obedience, is a regard to the will “ of God, and the way to that is to get our “ inclinations and aversions as much mortified as “ we can.”

With such a calm and peaceful mind, with such a blessed and lively hope, did this resigned servant of Christ wait for his Master's summons. The springs of life were unbending by degrees,

till at length the earthly tabernacle fell quite to decay, and was put off by the immortal spirit, in the 75th year of his age.

THE following interesting examples of the Power of Religion on the Minds of Persons in humble life, are extracted from the—"Letters of JOHN NEWTON, to an English Noblemen.

"Though the grand evidence of those truths upon which our hopes are built, arises from the authority of God speaking them in his word, and revealing them by his Spirit to the awakened heart, (for till the heart is awakened it is incapable of receiving this evidence); yet some of these truths are so mysterious, so utterly repugnant to the judgment of depraved nature, that through the remaining influence of unbelief and vain reasoning, the temptations of Satan, and the subtle arguments with which some men, reputed wise, attack the foundations of our faith, the minds even of believers are sometimes capable of being shaken. I know no

better corroborating evidence for the relief of the mind under such assaults, than the testimony of dying persons, especially of such as have lived out of the noise of controversy, and who, perhaps, never heard a syllable of what has been started in these evil days, against some of the important articles of the Christian Faith.

“Permit me, my Lord, to relate, upon this occasion, some things which exceedingly struck me in the conversation I had with a young woman, whom I visited in her last illness about two years ago. She was a sober, prudent person, of plain sense, could read the Bible, but had read little beside; her knowledge of the world was nearly confined to the parish; for I suppose she was seldom, if ever, twelve miles from home in her life. She had known the Gospel about seven years before the Lord visited her with a lingering consumption, which, at length, removed her to a better world. A few days before her death, in prayer by her bed-side, I thanked the Lord, that he gave her now to see that she had not followed cunningly devised fables.—When I had finished, she repeated that expression;—“No,” said she, “not cunningly de-

“vised fables; these are realities indeed; I feel
“their truth; I feel their comfort. O tell my
“friends, tell my acquaintance, tell inquiring
“souls, tell poor sinners, tell all the daughters
“of Jerusalem, (alluding to Solomon’s Song)
“what Jesus has done for my soul! Tell them,
“that now, in the time of need, I find him my
“Beloved and my Friend; and, as such, I com-
“mend him to them.”

She then fixed her eyes stedfastly upon me, and proceeded, as well as I can recollect, as follows:—“Sir, you are highly favoured in being called to preach the Gospel. I have often heard you with pleasure; but, give me leave to tell you, that I now see all you have said, or can say, is comparatively but little. Nor till you come into my situation, and have death and eternity full in your view, will it be possible for you to conceive the vast weight and importance of the truths you declare. Oh! Sir, it is a serious thing to die; no words can express what is needful to support the soul in the solemnity of a dying hour.”

When I visited her again, she said,——“I feel that my hope is fixed upon the Rock of Ages; I know in whom I have believed. But the

"approach of death presents a prospect which
"is, till then, hidden from us, and which cannot be described."—She said much more to the same purpose; and in all she spoke there were dignity, weight, and evidence. We may "well say, with Elihu,—“ who teacheth like “him?”

"Many instances of the like kind I have met with here. I have a poor girl near me, whose natural capacity is very small; but the Lord has been pleased to make her acquainted alternately with great temptations, and proportionably great discoveries of his love and truth; sometimes, when her heart is enlarged, I listen to her with astonishment. I think no books or ministers I ever met with, have given me such an impression and understanding of what the Apostle styles—"the deep things of God,"—as I have, upon some occasions, received from her conversation.

"We have lost another of the people here. A mother in our Israel. A person of much experience, eminent grace, wisdom, and usefulness. She walked with God forty years. She was one of the Lord's poor; but her poverty was decent, sanctified, and honourable. She

lived respected, and her death is considered as a public loss. It is a great loss to me ; I shall miss her advice and example, by which I have been often edified and animated. Almost her last words were,—“ The Lord is my portion, faith “ my soul.”

“ My attendance upon the sick is not always equally comfortable ; but could I learn aright, it might be equally instructive. Some confirm the preciousness of a Saviour to me, by the cheerfulness with which, through faith in his name, they meet the King of Terrors. Others no less confirm it, by the terror and reluctance they discover, when they find they must die. For though there are too many who sadly slight the blessed Gospel, while they are in health, yet, in this place, most are too far enlightened to be quite thoughtless about their souls, if they retain their senses in their last illness. Then, like the foolish virgins, they say,—“ Give us “ of your oil !”

“ Through the Lord’s goodness, several whom I have visited in these circumstances, have afforded good hope. I have seen a marvellous and blessed change take place, in their language, views, and temper, in a few days. I now visit a

young person, who is cut short in her nineteenth year, by a consumption, and I think cannot live many days. I found her very ignorant and insensible, and she remained so a good while; but of late I hope her heart is touched: She feels her lost state; she seems to have some right desires; and I cannot but hope the Lord is teaching her, and will reveal himself to her before she departs.

But the scene is sometimes different. I saw a young woman die last week: I had been often with her; but the night she was removed, she could only say,—“O I cannot live! I cannot live!”—She repeated this mournful complaint as long as she could speak; for as the vital powers were more oppressed, her voice was changed into groans; her groans grew fainter and fainter; and in about a quarter of an hour after she had done speaking, she expired. Poor thing, I thought, as I stood by her bed-side, if you were a duchess, in this situation, what could the world do for you now! I thought likewise, how many things are there that now give us pleasure or pain, and assume a mighty importance in our view, which, in a dying hour, will be no more to us, than the clouds which fly unnoticed

over our heads. Then the truth of our Lord's declaration will be seen, felt, and acknowledged, —“One thing is needful.”—And we shall be ready to apply Grotius's dying confession to, alas! a great part of our lives:—“Ah! I “have consumed my life, in laboriously doing “nothing!”

How greatly doth it exalt the mercy and goodness of the universal Parent of mankind, to perceive that his regard is equally towards his children and people, whatever may be their stations and conditions in the world! Verily, to the poor and illiterate, as well as to the rich and learned, the Gospel is preached; and those of every class who become truly humble and poor in spirit, and those only, will cordially receive and rejoice in it. Learning and knowledge are, indeed, ornaments and improvements of our nature; and, as well as riches, station, and influence, enable us to enlarge the sphere of our utility and beneficence: but it is not hence to be inferred, either that these qualifications are not attended with peculiar dangers, temptations, and inquietudes, or that the Father of Spirits, who is just and equal in all his ways, regards their possessors with distinguished marks

of his favour. The wisdom of Providence, to promote order and government in the earth, hath, indeed, ordained a diversity of talents and conditions amongst men; but he has also graciously declared, that to the religious and faithful improvement, of even the fewest talents, shall be annexed the highest reward that can be conferred upon us; namely, that of—"Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."—A humble and teachable disposition, a pious, upright, and benevolent temper of mind, are incomparably of greater worth, than all the accomplishments and possessions of the world; and they are the only attainments which in all degrees of knowledge, and in every station and condition of life, will procure the Divine Favour, and advance us to real honour and happiness.

THE FOLLOWING ACCOUNT OF AN AFFECTING, MOURNFUL EXIT, IS RELATED BY DOCTOR YOUNG, WHO WAS PRESENT AT THE MELANCHOLY SCENE.

“THE sad evening before the death of that noble youth, whose last hours suggested these thoughts, I was with him. No one was there, but his physician, and an intimate whom he loved, and whom he had ruined. At my coming in, he said,——“ You and the physician are come too late.—I have neither life nor hope. You both aim at miracles. You would raise the dead !”

“Heaven,” I said, “was merciful——“ Or,” exclaimed he,——“ I could not have been thus guilty. What has it not done to bless, and to save me ?—I have been too strong for Omnipotence ! I have plucked down ruin.”——I said, “the blessed Redeemer,”——“ Hold ! -hold ! you wound me !—That is the rock on which I split ——I denied his name !”

“Refusing to hear any thing from me, or take any thing from the physician, he lay silent, as far as sudden darts of pain would permit, till the clock struck : Then with vehemence ;——“ Oh ! time ! time ! it is fit thou shouldst thus strike

“thy murderer to the heart!—How art thou fled
“for ever!—A month!—Oh, for a single week!
“I ask not for years; though an age were too
“little for the much I have to do.”

“On my saying, we could not do too much:
that heaven was a blessed place—

“So much the worse.—’Tis lost! ’tis lost!—
“Heaven is to me the severest part of hell!”

“Soon after I proposed prayer. “Pray you
“that can. I never prayed. I cannot pray:—
“Nor need I. Is not Heaven on my side al-
“ready? It closes with my conscience. Its se-
“verest strokes but second my own.”

“His friend being much touched, even to tears
at this—(who could forbear? I could not)—with
a most affectionate look, he said, “Keep those
“tears for thyself. I have undone thee.—Dost
“weep for me? that’s cruel. What can pain
“me more?”

“Here his friend, too much affected, would
have left him.—“No, stay—thou still may’st
“hope;—therefore hear me. How madly have
“I talk’d! How madly hast thou listened, and
“believed! but look on my present state, as a
“full answer to thee, and to myself. This body
“is all weakness and pain; but my soul, as if

“stung up by torment to greater strength and
“spirit, is full powerful to reason; full mighty
“to suffer. And that, which thus triumphs
“within the jaws of immortality, is, doubtless,
“immortal—And, as for a Deity, nothing less
“than an Almighty could inflict what I feel.”

“I was about to congratulate this passive, involuntary confessor, on his asserting the two prime articles of his creed, extorted by the rack of nature, when he thus, very passionately:—“No,
“no! let me speak on. I have not long to speak.
“—My much injured friend! my soul, as my
“body, lies in ruins; in scattered fragments of
“broken thought—Remorse for the past, throws
“my thought on the future. Worse dread of
“the future, strikes it back on the past. I turn,
“and turn, and find no ray. Didst thou feel
“half the mountain that is on me, thou wouldst
“struggle with the martyr for his stake; and
“bless Heaven for the flames!—that is not an
“everlasting flame; that is not an unquenchable
“fire.”

“How were we struck! yet, soon after, still more. With what an eye of distraction, what a face of despair! he cried out:—“My principles have poisoned my friend; my extrava-

“gance has beggared my boy! my unkindness has
“murdered my wife!—And is there another
“hell?—Oh! thou blasphemed, yet indulgent
“**LORD GOD!** Hell itself is a refuge, if it
“hide me from thy frown!”

“Soon after his understanding failed. His terrified imagination uttered horrors not to be repeated, or ever forgotten. And ere the Sun (which, I hope, has seen few like him) arose, the gay, young, noble, ingenious, accomplished, and most wretched Altamont expired!

“If this is a man of pleasure, what is a man of pain? How quick, how total, is their transit! In what a dismal gloom they set for ever! How short, alas! the day of their rejoicing!—For a moment they glitter—they dazzle. In a moment, where are they? Oblivion covers their memories. Ah! would it did! Infamy snatches them from oblivion. In the long-living annals of infamy their triumphs are recorded. Thy sufferings still bleed in the bosom, poor Altamont! of the heart-stricken friend—for Altamont had a friend. He might have had many. His transient morning might have been the dawn of an immortal day. His name might have been gloriously enrolled in the records of eternity.

His memory might have left a sweet fragrance behind it, grateful to the surviving friend, salutary to the succeeding generation. With what capacities was he endowed! with what advantages, for being greatly good! But with the talents of an angel, a man may be a fool. If he judges amiss in the supreme point, judging right in all else, but aggravates his folly; as it shews him wrong, though blessed with the best capacity of being right."

The late SOAME JENNINGS, Esq. Member of Parliament for Cambridge, is well known to have been a man of talents, virtue, and learning.

The sentiments of this distinguished person, on the purity and excellence of the spirit and precepts of the Gospel, contain such a strong testimony to the power and efficacy of true Religion; and appear to have been formed so much under its influence, that we shall close these Memoirs with a few extracts from them.

"Let us examine," says he, "what are the new precepts in the Christian Religion, which

peculiarly correspond with its object, the preparing us for the kingdom of heaven. Of these, the chief are, poorness of spirit, forgiveness of injuries, and charity to all men: to these, we may add repentance, faith, self-absement, and a detachment from the world; all moral duties peculiar to this Religion, and absolutely necessary to the attainment of its end.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is “the kingdom of heaven.”—By which poorness of spirit, is to be understood a disposition of mind, meek, humble, submissive to power, void of ambition, patient of injuries, and free from all resentment. This was so new, and so opposite to the ideas of all Pagan moralists, that they thought this temper of mind a criminal and contemptible meanness, which must induce men to sacrifice the glory of their country, and their own honour to a shameful pusillanimity; and such it appears to almost all who are called Christians, even at this day, who not only reject it in practice, but disavow it in principle, notwithstanding this explicit declaration of their master. We see them revenging the smallest affronts by premeditated murder, as individuals, on principles of honour; and, in their national capacities, de-

stroying each other with fire and sword, for the low considerations of commercial interests, the balance of rival powers, or the ambition of Princes: we see them with their last breath animating each other to a savage revenge; and, in the agonies of death, plunging, with feeble arms, their daggers into the hearts of their opponents: and, what is still worse, we hear all these barbarisms celebrated by Historians; flattered by Poets; applauded in Theatres; approved in Senates; and even sanctified in Pulpits! But universal practice cannot alter the nature of things, nor universal error change the nature of truth. Pride was not made for man, but humility, meekness, and resignation; that is, poorness of spirit was made for man, and properly belongs to his dependent and precarious situation; and is the only disposition of mind, which can enable him to enjoy ease and quiet here, and happiness hereafter. Yet was this important precept entirely unknown, until it was promulgated by him who said,——“Suffer little children to
“come unto me, and forbid them not; for of
“such is the kingdom of heaven: verily I say
“unto you, whoever shall not receive the king-

“dom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.”

“Another precept, equally new, and no less excellent, is forgiveness of injuries.—“Ye have heard,” says Christ to his disciples,—“Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy: but I say unto you, love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you.”—This was a lesson so new, and so utterly unknown, till taught by his doctrines, and enforced by his example, that the wisest moralists of the wisest nations and ages, represented the desire of revenge as a mark of a noble mind, and the accomplishment of it as one of the chief felicities attendant on a fortunate man.

“But how much more magnanimous, how much more beneficial to mankind is forgiveness! it is more magnanimous, because every generous and exalted disposition of the human mind is requisite to the practice of it; for these alone can enable us to bear the wrongs and insults of wickedness and folly with patience, and to look down on the perpetrators of them, with pity, rather than indignation; these alone can teach us, that

such are but a part of those sufferings allotted to us in this state of probation; and to know, that to overcome evil with good, is the most glorious of all victories. It is the most beneficial, because this amiable conduct alone can put an end to a continual succession of injuries and retaliations; for every retaliation becomes a new injury, and requires another act of revenge for satisfaction. But would we observe this salutary precept,—"to love our enemies, and to do good to those "who despitefully us,"—this obstinate benevolence would at last conquer the most inveterate hearts, and we should have no enemies to forgive. How much more exalted a character therefore is a Christian Martyr, suffering with resignation, and praying for the guilty, than that of a Pagan Hero, breathing revenge, and destroying the innocent! Yet, noble and useful as this virtue is, before the appearance of this Religion, it was not only unpractised, but decried in principle, as mean and ignominious, though so obvious a remedy for most of the miseries of this life, and so necessary a qualification for the happiness of another.

"Repentance is another new moral duty strenuously insisted on by this Religion. But no

repentance can remove our depravity, but such as entirely changes the nature and disposition of the offender; which, in the language of Scripture, is called—"Being born again."

"Mere contrition for past crimes, nor even the pardon of them, cannot effect this, unless it operate to this entire conversion or new birth, as it is properly and emphatically named; for sorrow can no more purify a mind corrupted by a long continuance in vicious habits, than it can restore health to a body disordered by a long course of vice and intemperance. Hence also, every one who is in the least acquainted with himself, may judge of the reasonableness of the hope that is in him, and of his situation in a future state, by that of his present.

"If he feels in himself a temper proud, turbulent, vindictive, and malevolent, and a violent attachment to the pleasures or business of the world, he may be assured that he must be excluded from the kingdom of heaven; not only because his conduct can attract no such reward; but because, if admitted, he would find there no objects satisfactory to his passions, inclinations, and pursuits.

"Faith is another moral duty enjoined by this

institution, and to be found in the New Testament; where, in general, it signifies an humble, teachable; and candid disposition, a trust in God, and confidence in his promises; and it is always a direct contrast to pride, obstinacy, and self-conceit.

“Self-abasement is another moral duty inculcated by this Religion only; which requires us to impute even our own virtues, to the grace and favour of our Creator; and to acknowledge, that we can do nothing good by our own powers, unless assisted by his over-ruling influence. This doctrine seems, at first-sight, to infringe on our free-will, and to deprive us of all merit; but, on a closer examination, the truth of it may be demonstrated both by reason and experience, and that, in fact, it does not impair the one, or depreciate the other; and that it is productive of so much humility, resignation, and dependence on God, that it justly claims a place amongst the most illustrious moral virtues.

“Detachment from the world is another moral virtue constituted by this Religion alone; so new, that, even at this day, few of its professors can be persuaded that it is required, or that it is any virtue at all. By this detachment from:

the world, is not to be understood a seclusion from society, abstraction from all business, or retirement to a gloomy cloister. Industry and labour, cheerfulness and hospitality, are frequently recommended; nor is the acquisition of wealth and honours prohibited, if they can be obtained by honest means, and a moderate degree of attention and care; but such an unremitted anxiety, and perpetual application, as engross our whole time and thoughts, are forbid, because they are incompatible with the spirit of this Religion, and must utterly disqualify us for the attainment of its great end. We toil on in the vain pursuits and frivolous occupations of the world, die in our harness, and then expect, if no gigantic crime stand in the way, to step immediately into the kingdom of heaven: but without a previous detachment from the business of this world, we cannot be prepared for the happiness of another.

“ Yet this could make no part of the morality of Pagans, because their virtues were altogether connected with this business, and consisted chiefly in conducting it with honour to themselves, and benefit to the public: but Christianity has a nobler object in view, which, if not attended to,

must be lost for ever. This object is that celestial mansion, of which we should never lose sight, and to which we should be ever advancing during our journey through life : but this by no means precludes us from performing the business, or enjoying the amusements of travellers, provided they detain us not too long, nor lead us out of our way.

“ Another precept, first noticed and first enjoined by this institution, is charity to all men. What this is, we may best learn from the admirable description, painted in the following words:—“ Charity suffereth long, and is kind ;
“ charity envieth not ; charity vaunteth not itself ; is not puffed up ; doth not behave itself unseemly ; seeketh not her own ; is not easily provoked ; thinketh no evil ; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in truth ; beareth all things ; believeth all things ; hopeth all things ; endureth all things.”—Here we have an accurate delineation of this bright constellation of all virtues, which consists not, as many imagine, in the building of monasteries, endowment of hospitals, or the distribution of alms ; but in such an amiable disposition of mind, as exercises itself every hour in acts of kindness, patience,

complacency, and benevolence to all around us; and which alone is able to promote happiness in the present life, or render us capable of receiving it in another. And yet this is totally new, and so it is declared to be by the Author of it;—
“A new commandment I give unto you, that
“ye love one another; as I have loved you, that
“ye love one another; by this shall all men
“know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love
“one to another.”—This benevolent disposition is made the great characteristic of a Christian, the test of his obedience, and the mark by which he is to be distinguished.

“This love for each other, is that charity just now described, and contains all those qualities which are there attributed to it; humility, patience, meekness, and beneficence: without which we must live in perpetual discord, and consequently cannot pay obedience to this commandment by loving one another: a commandment so sublime, so rational, and so beneficial, so wisely calculated to correct the depravity, diminish the wickedness, and abate the miseries of human nature, that did we universally comply with it, we should soon be relieved from all the inquietudes arising from our own unruly passions,

anger, envy, revenge, malice, and ambition; as well as from all those injuries, to which we are perpetually exposed, from the indulgence of the same passions in others. It would also preserve our minds in such a state of tranquillity, and so prepare them for the kingdom of heaven, that we should slide out of a life of peace, love, and benevolence, into that celestial society, by an almost imperceptible transition."

CONCLUSION.

THE Reader has been presented, in the preceding collection, with the testimonies and experience of a number of his fellow-creatures, of different periods, countries, professions, and situations in life; all uniting in their attestation to the Power and Excellence of true Religion, as our surest guide and consolation through time, and the only means of securing eternal happiness. This solemn and concurrent testimony is of great weight, as it proceeds from some of the most eminent persons that have ever appeared in the world, whether we consider their station, their abilities, or their virtue. The wisdom and experience of such characters, addressing us on a subject of the most interesting nature, is certainly an object of great moment, and one that claims our serious and reverent attention.

Some of them seem not to have been deeply impressed with religious considerations, till near the termination of their days; and they have

then had to lament the misapplication of their time, and the postponing the great end for which they had a being.—Others appear to have made an early, or more seasonable, choice of virtue and goodness for their portion; and to have spent a great part of life in the fear and love of God, and in doing good to mankind: they have enjoyed that peace of mind, which the world could neither give nor take away; and a cheering well-grounded hope has accompanied them to the closing scene, that there was reserved for them a crown of immortal honour. What an evidence on behalf of piety and virtue!—What a dissuasive from vice and folly!—And how animating to weary travellers, to persevere in the paths of goodness, and to keep their eyes fixed on that happy country, where they too shall rest for ever from all their labours!

But we live in a world of danger and temptation. Propensities to evil are powerful; and the riches, honours, and pleasures of life, are continually alluring us to an immoderate love and pursuit of them: and as the subtle enemy of all good is perpetually on the watch to avail himself of our weakness and exposure, and to ensnare and destroy us, our safety consists in being always

upon our guard, and in stedfastly resisting every approach of evil.

But who is sufficient for these things?—In this situation, how shall we preserve our innocence, maintain the warfare, and finally become victorious?—There is no surer truth, than that this power is not of ourselves; but that it proceeds from the grace of God, unto whom we are directed to apply daily, for preservation in temptation, and deliverance from evil.—The perusal of valuable books, reflection, converse, and other means of moral and intellectual improvement, are indeed of great use and importance. Besides enlarging the mind, and promoting our temporal comfort and advantage, they may be the means of spreading before us a pleasing view of the beauty and excellence of Religion; and may occasion some desires for the possession of that happiness which it confers: but unless the DIVINE AID be sought for and superadded, they will be defective in principle, and will not be able to produce that strength of resolution, and steady perseverance, which are necessary to crown our labours with success. Interest, passion, depraved inclination, and the love of the world, in constant operation, are too powerful to be controuled, by

flight and temporary convictions of mind, or feeble and transient wishes of the heart.

May we, therefore, never rest satisfied with even clear apprehensions of our duty, just sentiments of the amiableness and excellence of Religion, and frequent desires to be its disciples, and partake of its felicity; nor be content with cultivating the most refined and regular ideas on these subjects:—but may it be our most weighty and steadfast concern, in the use of all the means of improvement, to look up, through the Redeemer of the world, to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for the gracious assistance of his Holy Spirit, in the great work of our salvation, as the only power which can bring into operation our sentiments and desires, sanctify and render effectual our endeavours to please him, and produce in us the highest perfection of our nature.

He that formed our spirits, who is constantly present with us, and without whose superintendence not a sparrow falls to the ground, knows all our wants and frailties; and is not only able, but abundantly disposed, to grant all that we request, according to his will, for our supply and support.—“Ask, and it shall be given you;

“seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be
“opened unto you.”—Let us not, therefore,
be dismayed with the perils of our situation, and
the feebleness of our powers; but with prepared
hearts, and in humble confidence, apply to the
Father of Light and Goodness, for his protection
and assistance, to conduct us safely through the
present life, and to qualify us for a happy im-
mortality.

APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

SOME EXTRACTS

FROM THE WRITINGS OF

PIOUS AND EMINENT MEN,

AGAINST THE

ENTERTAINMENTS OF THE STAGE,

AND OTHER

VAIN AMUSEMENTS.



INTRODUCTION.

IN this age of extreme refinement and pleasurable pursuits, it appears to be almost hopeless, and may, by some, be deemed presumptuous, to attempt to draw the public attention to any strictures, or to the sentiments of any persons whatever, against the favourite and much frequented Entertainments of the Stage. But as we live in times of free inquiry, and when candid examinations of all opinions, decently advanced, are recommended, perhaps the following sentiments of of several great and good men, on the dangerous nature and tendency of dramatic amusements, may be perused with some degree of patience and attention. As, from the weakness of the human mind, its attachment to ancient opinion, and reverence for authority, there is wisdom in freely investigating some long established notions; and the result has often been a dissipation of error, and an establishment of truth; so it is of equal, if not of superior importance, to examine, with impartiality and care, many of our modes of practice, and established indulgencies in life.

There is the greater necessity for this scrutiny of conduct, because action, more than speculation, forms the character; and because our passions, depravity, and love of the world, peculiarly dispose us to an attachment to pernicious and pleasurable habits, supported by the authority and practice of numbers around us.

Encouraged by these considerations, the Compiler has ventured to introduce the sentiments and testimonies of a few virtuous characters, against some indulgencies which at present meet with general approbation. The subject is far from being here largely discussed; a few only of the most interesting views of it are simply spread before the reader: yet it is presumed that, if justly delineated, they are of such importance as to claim the most serious attention. To such an examination they are readily submitted; under a hope that, if conviction of their propriety should be the result, no attachment to former conduct, or present pleasure, will preponderate against the dictates of conscience, and that peace of mind, which is, beyond all comparison, a higher enjoyment than the most refined amusements of the world can bestow.

EXTRACTS, &c.

FROM THE GREAT PASCALL.

“**T**HERE is nothing more capable of letting us into the knowledge of human misery, than an inquiry after the real cause of that perpetual hurry and confusion, in which we pass our lives. The soul is sent into the body, to be the sojourner of a few days. She knows this is but a stop, till she may embark for eternity; and that a small space is allowed her to prepare for the voyage. The main part of this space is ravished from her by the necessities of nature, and but a slender pittance left to her own disposal: and yet, this moment that remains, does so strangely oppress and perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it. She feels an intolerable burden, in being obliged to live with herself, and think of herself; and, therefore, her principal care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious moment pass away without reflection, by being amused with things that prevent her notice of its speed. This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the trifling diversions

amongst men; in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands, without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves; and, by getting rid of this small portion of life, to avoid that inward disgust and bitterness, which we should not fail to meet with, if we found leisure to descend into our own breasts.

Having no infallible remedy against ignorance, misery, and death, we imagine that, at least, some respite, some shelter, may be found, by agreeing to banish them from our meditation. This is the only natural comfort which mankind have been able to invent under their numerous calamities. But a most miserable comfort it proves; because it does not tend to the removal of these evils, but only to the concealment of them for a short season; and because, in thus concealing them it hinders us from applying such proper means as would remove them. Thus, by a strange revolution in the nature of man, that grief and inward disquiet which he dreads as the greatest of sensible evils, is, in one respect, his greatest good; because it might contribute, more than all things besides, to the putting of him in a successful method of recovery. On the other hand, his diversions, which he seems to prize as his sovereign good, are, in-

deed, his greatest evil; because they are of all things the most effectual in making him negligent under his distemper: they do but amuse and beguile him; and, in the conclusion, lead him down blindfold into the grave. It is, indeed, one of the miracles of Christianity, that, by reconciling man to God, it restores him to his own good opinion; that it makes him able to bear the sight of himself; and, in some cases, renders solitude and silence more agreeable than all the intercourse and action of mankind. Nor is it by fixing man in his own person, that these wonderful effects are produced; it is by carrying him to God, and by supporting him under the sense of his miseries, with the hopes of an assured and complete deliverance in a better life.

FROM THE PRINCE OF CONTI.

—“The call which men have for diversion, is not by far so great as is thought, and it consists more in imagination or in custom, than in a real necessity. Those who are employed in bodily labour, have only need of a bare cessation from it. Those who are employed in affairs toilsome to the mind, and but little laborious to the body, have need to recollect themselves from that dis-

position which those sort of employments naturally cause, and not to dissipate themselves yet more, by diversions which extremely engage the mind. It is a jest to fancy that one has need to pass three hours in filling the mind with follies at a play. Those who find in themselves this need, ought to look on it, not as a natural weakness, but as a vice of custom, which they must cure by serious employment."

—"If the soul abandon itself to false pleasures, it loses the relish of spiritual ones, and finds nothing but disgust for the Word of God. When one feeds himself with the vain pleasures of the world, the spiritual senses become stupified, and incapable of relishing, or understanding, the things of God.—Now, among the pleasures of the world, which extinguish the love of the Word of God, it may be said that plays and romances hold the first rank; because there is nothing more opposed to truth; and the Spirit of God, being a spirit of truth, can have no part with the vanities of the world."

—"Plays and romances not only indispose the soul for all acts of religion and piety, but they give it a disgust, in some measure, to all serious and ordinary actions. As nothing is re-

presented in them but gallantries, or extraordinary adventures, and the discourses are far distant from such as are used in serious affairs, one insensibly takes from them a romantic disposition of mind: the head is filled with heroes and heroines; and women, seeing the adorations which, in them, are given to their sex, have that sort of life so much impressed on their minds, that the affairs of their family and of common life, become insupportable to them; and when they return to their houses, with minds thus evaporated and filled with these follies, they find every thing there disagreeable, and especially their husbands, who, being taken up with their affairs, are not always in the humour of paying them those ridiculous complaisances which are given to women in plays, in romances, and in the romantic life."

—"Those deceive themselves extremely, who think that plays make no ill impression on them, because they do not find them excite any formed evil desire. There are many degrees before one comes to an entire corruption of mind; and it is always extremely hurtful to the soul, to destroy the ramparts which secured it from temptation.

“One does not begin to fall when the fall becomes sensible; the fallings of the soul are slow, they have preparations and progressions; and it often happens, that we are overcome by temptations, only by our having weakened ourselves in occasions which seemed of no importance: it being certain, that he who despises little things, shall fall by little and little.”

——“It must not be imagined that the wicked maxims of which plays are full, are not hurtful, because people do not go there to form their sentiments, but to divert themselves; for they do not fail of making impressions, notwithstanding, without being perceived.—For instance, the opinion that the chimera of honour is so great a good, that it must be preserved, even at the expence of life, is what produces the brutal rage of the gentlemen of France. If those who fight a duel were never spoken of but as fools and madmen—as indeed they are; if that phantom of honour, which is their idol, were never represented but as a chimera and a folly; if care were taken never to form any image of revenge, but as of a mean and cowardly action; the resentment which men feel upon an affront would be infinitely weaker; but that which exasperates and renders it the more lively, is the false im-

pression, that there is cowardice in bearing an affront. Now, it cannot be denied that plays, which are full of these evil maxims, do greatly contribute to fortify that impression; because the mind being by them transported, and entirely out of itself, instead of correcting those sentiments, abandons itself to them without resistance, and delights to feel the motions they inspire, which dispose it to produce the like upon occasion."

—"God does not impute to us the coldness which proceeds from the withdrawing of his light, or merely from the heaviness of this body; but, no doubt, he imputes to us that to which we have contributed by our negligence, and our vain diversions. It is his will that we should esteem nothing so much as the gracious gift which he has made us of his love; and that we should be careful to preserve it by giving it nourishment. This command he has intimated to us in the persons of the priests in the ancient law, whom he ordains always to maintain the fire on the altar, and to take care to put wood upon it every day in the morning. This altar is the heart of man, and every Christian is the priest; who ought to be careful to nourish

the fire of charity on the altar of his heart, by putting wood every day upon it; that is to say, maintaining it by the meditation of divine things, and by exercises of piety. Now, if those who go to plays have yet any sense of piety, they cannot disown that plays deaden, and tend to entirely extinguish devotion; so that they should not doubt, God judges them extremely guilty, for having made so little account of his love, that instead of nourishing and endeavouring to augment it, they have not feared to extinguish it by their vain diversions; and that he will impute to them as a great sin, the abatement or the loss of their love to him. For if a dissipation of the goods of the world and of earthly riches, by luxury and gaming, is no little sin, what must be judged of a dissipation of the goods of grace, and of that precious treasure the Scripture speaks of, which we ought to purchase, by the loss of all the goods, and all the pleasures of this life?"

FROM CHIEF JUSTICE HALE.

"BEWARE of too much recreation. Some bodily exercise is necessary, for sedentary men especially; but let it not be too frequent, nor too

long. Gaming, taverns, and plays, as they are pernicious, and corrupt youth, so, if they had no other fault, they are justly to be declined, in respect of their excessive expence of time, and habituating men to idleness and vain thoughts, and disturbing passions and symptoms, when they are past, as well as while they are used."

CLARKE, in his Essay on Study, speaking of plays and romances, says,—“By what I have
“seen of them, they are generally very indif-
“creetly and foolishly written, in a way proper
“to recommend vanity and wickedness, rather
“than discredit them; they have a strong tend-
“ency to corrupt and debauch the mind with
“filly, mischievous notions of love and honour,
“and other things relating to the conduct of
“life.”

ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON, on the subject of plays, says,—“They are intolerable, and not
“fit to be permitted in a civilized, much less a
“Christian nation. They do most notoriously mi-
“nister to vice and infidelity. By their profane-
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“ness, they are apt to instil bad principles into

“ the minds of men, and to lessen that awe and
“ reverence which all men ought to have of God
“ and religion ; and by their lewdness, they teach
“ vice, and are apt to infect the minds of men,
“ and dispose them to lewd and dissolute prac-
“ tices.”

ROLLIN, Principal of the University of Paris, and a zealous advocate for the moral and religious education of youth, recites the following passage from the writings of Rochefoucault, with approbation :

“ All great diversions are dangerous to a Chris-
“ tian : but of all that have been invented, there is
“ none we have so much reason to fear as plays.
“ The passions, in these entertainments, are so
“ naturally and artfully delineated, that they are
“ excited by them, and imprinted on our hearts,
“ especially that of love ; and this more forcibly,
“ when it is represented as chaste and honest :
“ for the more innocent it appears to innocent
“ souls, the more strongly are they disposed to be
“ affected with it.”

THE FOLLOWING ARE TAKEN FROM THE WORKS
OF WILLIAM LAW.

——“ THE pleasures and diversions of people are certain means for judging of the state of their minds: nothing can please or affect us, but what is according to our nature, and which finds something within us that is suitable to itself. Had we not inward dispositions of tenderness and compassion, we should not find ourselves softened with miserable objects. In like manner, had we not in our nature lively seeds of those disorders which are acted upon the stage, were there not some inward corruption, that finds itself gratified by the irregular passions that are there represented, we should find no more pleasure in the stage, than blind men find in pictures. If impure speeches, if wanton amours, if wild passions, and immoral rant, can give us any delight, is it not past all doubt, that we have something of all these disorders in our nature? (*and that we nourish and strengthen them by those gratifications?*)”

——“ You own that God has called you to great purity of conversation; that you are forbid all *foolish discourse*, and *filthy jesting*, as expressly as you are forbid swearing; and that

you are told, to *let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth*; and yet you go to a house of corrupt communication; you hire persons to entertain you with ribaldry, profaneness, rant, and impurity of discourse, who are to present you with poisonous sentiments, and lewd imaginations, dressed up in elegant language, and to make wicked, vain, and impure discourse more lively and delightful, than you could possibly have it in any ill company. Is not this sinning with a high hand, and grossly offending against the plainest precepts of Scripture?"

—"There is no doctrine of our blessed Saviour that more concerns all Christians, or is more essential to their salvation than this:—" Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall "see God."—Now, take the stage in its best state, when some admired tragedy is upon it; are the extravagant passions of distracted lovers, the impure ravings of inflamed heroes, the joys and torments of love, and refined descriptions of lusts—are the indecent actions, the amorous transports, the wanton address of the actors, which make so great a part of the most sober and modest tragedies—are these things consistent with this Christian doctrine of purity of heart?"

——“As prejudices, the force of education, the authority of numbers, the way of the world, the example of great names, may make people believe, so the same causes may make people act, against all sense and reason, and be guilty of practices which are utterly inconsistent with the purity of their religion.”

——“All people who enter into these houses of entertainment, or contribute the smallest mite towards them, must look on themselves as having been, so far, friends to the most powerful instruments of sensuality; and to be guilty of contributing to an open and public exercise of splendid impurity and profaneness. When we encourage any good design, either with our consent, our money, or presence, we are apt to take a great deal of merit to ourselves; we presently conclude, that we are partakers of all that is good and praise-worthy in it, of all the benefit that arises from it, because we are contributors towards it. A man does not think that he has no share in some public charity, because he is but one in ten thousand that contributes towards it; but if it be a religious charity, and attended with great and happy effects, his conscience tells him, that he is a sharer of all that

great good to which he contributed. Now, let this teach us how we ought to judge of the guilt of encouraging any thing that is bad, either with our consent, our money, or our presence. We must not consider how much our single part contributes towards it, how much less we contribute than several thousands of other people, (*nor that the work would go forward, if we did not at all contribute to it;*) but we must look at the whole thing in itself; and whatever there is of evil in it, or whatever evil arises from it, we must charge ourselves with a share of the whole guilt of so great an evil."

—"People of fashion and quality have great advantage above the vulgar; their condition and education give them a liveliness and brightness of parts, from whence one might justly expect a more exalted virtue. How comes it then, that we see as ill morals, as little religious wisdom, and as great disorders among them, as among the most rude, uneducated part of the world? It is because *the extreme politeness of their lives, their course of diversions and amusements, and their ways of spending their time*, as much extinguish the wisdom and light of religion, as the grossness and ignorance of the dullest part of the world.—

Any way of life *that darkens our minds, that misemploys our understanding, that fills us with a trifling spirit, that disorders our passions, that separates us from the Spirit of God,* is the same certain road to destruction, whether it arise from stupid sensuality, rude ignorance, or polite pleasures. Had any one, therefore, the power of an apostle, or the tongue of an angel, it would be well employed, in exposing, and dissuading from those ways of life, which wealth, corruption, and extreme politeness, have brought among us. We, indeed, only call them diversions; but they do the whole work of idolatry and infidelity, and fill people with so much blindness and hardness of heart, that they neither live by wisdom, nor feel the want of it, but are content to play away their lives with scarce any attention to the approaching scenes of death, judgment, and eternity."

CONCLUDING ADDRESS TO THE READER.

IT must be evident to every sober and unprejudiced mind, that the sentiments of these virtuous and enlightened men, on the corrupting influence, and the fatal amusements, of the theatre, merit the most serious and attentive consideration: and to some minds, it is apprehended, they will appear to be solid and awakening reflections.

If it be true, that many profane, indecent, and irreligious sentiments are to be found in the works of dramatic writers, and these sentiments coloured with the softest names, and recommended on the stage by the most captivating characters and action;—if the senses and imagination are so charmed with the elegance of the scenery, the richness of the dresses, the power of the music, the address of the performers, and the gaiety and splendour of the whole surrounding scene, as to deprive the mind of sober reflection, and agitate it too much for receiving benefit from moral and rational instruction—if these passionate

and fascinating exhibitions injure the delicacy of our best feelings, and gradually weaken our abhorrence of immoral indulgencies; if they frequently break down the ramparts of our virtue, and lay us open to the inroads and government of vice and folly;—if they chiefly address the inferior powers of our nature, our senses, imagination, and passions, and regale them with such high-seasoned enjoyments, as too often vitiate our moral taste, and not only indispose, but give us a disgust to every composition that is not much refined, and especially to the Holy Scriptures, and those sober and religious studies and engagements, which form the great duties of life, and promote our happiness here and hereafter;—if the persons who attend these places of diversion, do neither look for, nor receive, any serious impressions from them, but, on the contrary, often find their minds enervated, and accompanied with a vain and romantic spirit;—if they occupy, in the perusal and exhibition, in the preparation for them and languor after them, so much of our precious time, as to prevent us from attending to necessary and important concerns; and thus also superinduce habits of indolence and dissipation;—if they abound with flattering pictures

of the world, and present, to the youthful mind especially, such highly finished and captivating views of human life and happiness, as are seldom or never realized ; and hence, besides an aversion or indifference to the ordinary duties and affairs of mankind, not unfrequently produce deep anxiety, disappointment, and discontent through time ;—if it be of importance to preserve the principles and manners of the rising generation pure and untainted, to prevent them from being governed by their imagination and passions, and to encourage in them modesty, humility, moderation, and a reverence for piety and virtue ;—if religion and goodness must be supported by constant care and vigilance, and our preservation from evil depends on our avoiding temptations, and praying daily for Divine assistance against it ;—if many great and good men have borne public testimony against the pernicious tendency of these amusements ; and if numbers of serious and worthy characters of all denominations, have been convinced of the evils connected with them, and thought it their duty to avoid and discourage the attendance and support of them ;—if Christianity teaches us to consider ourselves as strangers and pilgrims, travelling towards a better country ; and admonishes

is not to love the world, nor to be conformed to its vain customs and fashions, but to be transformed by the renewing of our minds, and to maintain a steady self-denial against the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life:—if these are the common effects and consequences of dramatic entertainments, and truths which cannot fairly be controverted, can we hesitate to acknowledge, that they are of the highest moment, and that it is incumbent upon us not to expose our principles and virtue to the influence of temptations, which are the more dangerous, as they are highly pleasing, little suspected, and seldom opposed?

What advantages can they yield us, that will compensate for the loss or hazard of interests so important? All the pleasures, and all the refinements which their warmest votaries have ever found in them, are indeed a poor recompence for the corruption, extravagance, and misery which they have too frequently sown the seeds of, and produced in human life.

It becomes us then, as rational beings, as Christians, who are called to renounce the vanities of this transient precarious state, and who have a permanent and better world in view, to

assert the dignity of our nature, and to act conformably to the importance of our destination. A few fleeting years will bring us all to the verge of an awful scene, when the vain diversions and pastimes, which are now so highly prized, will appear in their true light, a most lamentable abuse of that precious time and talent with which we have been entrusted, for the great purpose of working out our soul's salvation. At that solemn period, the great business of religion, a pious and virtuous life, dedicated to the love and service of God, will appear of inestimable value, and, in the highest degree, worthy of the concern and pursuit of reasonable beings. Happy will it be for us, if we become wise in time, take up the cross to all ensnaring pleasures, for the few remaining days of our lives, and steadily persevere, under the Divine Aid, in fulfilling the various duties assigned us, and in making suitable returns to the Author of all good, for the unmerited blessings which he hath bountifully bestowed upon us. In these exalted employments we shall experience the noblest pleasure, and feel no want of empty and injurious entertainments, to occupy our minds, or to fill up our time. In the scenes and productions of nature, and in the useful

works of art ; in the faithful narratives of human life, and the descriptions of interesting objects ; in the endearments of social and domestic intercourse ; in acts of charity and benevolence ; and in the pleasing reflections of an upright and self-approving mind, we shall perceive also abundant sources of innocent refreshment and true cheerfulness, as well as the means of enlarging our understandings and improving our hearts.

May those persons, therefore, who have doubts respecting the propriety of indulging themselves in theatrical amusements, and, indeed, may all who read these lines, seriously consider the hazard of such indulgencies, and give the subject that attention which its importance demand. May those especially, who are convinced of their dangerous nature and tendency, reject with abhorrence the solicitations of appetite and pleasure, and the fallacious reasonings which are often adduced in their support. May we never be imposed on by the common, but delusive sentiments, that moral and religious improvement is to be acquired from such impure mixtures ; and that the literary merit, and accurate knowledge of the human heart, which are displayed in many parts of dramatic works, will atone for the fatal wounds

which innocence, delicacy, and religion, too frequently suffer from these performances. But being convinced that depraved nature will ever select what is most congenial to itself; and that the pleasures derived from refined composition, and the exhibitions of taste and elegance, may be purchased at too dear a rate, let us resolutely and uniformly oppose what we believe to be evil, however it may be arrayed; and do our utmost to discourage, by our example and influence, those powerful and destructive engines of dissipation, profaneness, and corruption.

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THE END.

